

CHILDREN'S
SIVANANDA



VANI BAI RAM

The gifted authoress on whom the title of "Divya Jivana Jyoti" was also conferred by Swamiji himself has given a treasure ; it will compel the reader to go on a pilgrimage to Rishikesh, the Abode of Bliss where the great saint lives and drink at the fountain-source of wisdom.

* * *

"Children's Sivananda" reveals the mysteries of the divine personality of the great saint Sivananda of the Himalayas. This unique presentation will certainly appeal to a vast section of the mankind. The questions and answers in the end and some of her personal letters to Swami Maharaj and the prompt and instructive replies she received from Guru Dev, will only prove the simplicity and the purity of the Swami and will clear the doubts if any of the aspirants about the ashram and its founder. This inestimable gift of Shrimati Vanibai will be beneficial to the

9/29

CHILDREN'S SIVANANDA

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VANI BAI RAM

with a foreword by
DR. S. RADHAKRISHNAN

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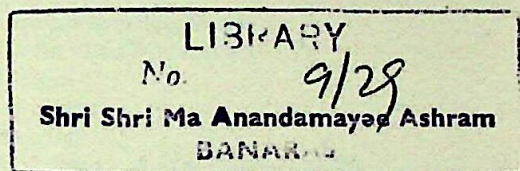
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Dedicated to
The Memory of my beloved husband
DR. V. S. RAM

With Gurudev's blessings, I pray for the
Peace of my departed husband's soul.
Om Shantih : Shantih : Shantih :





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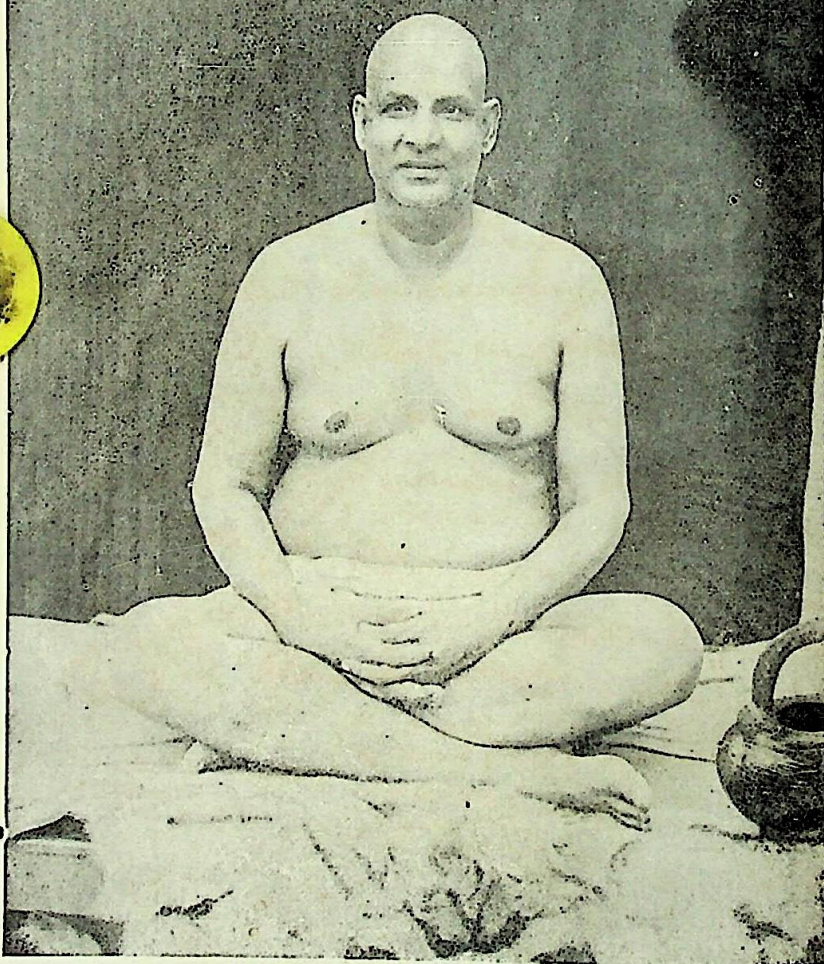
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Pujya Gurudeva

3

29th October 1957

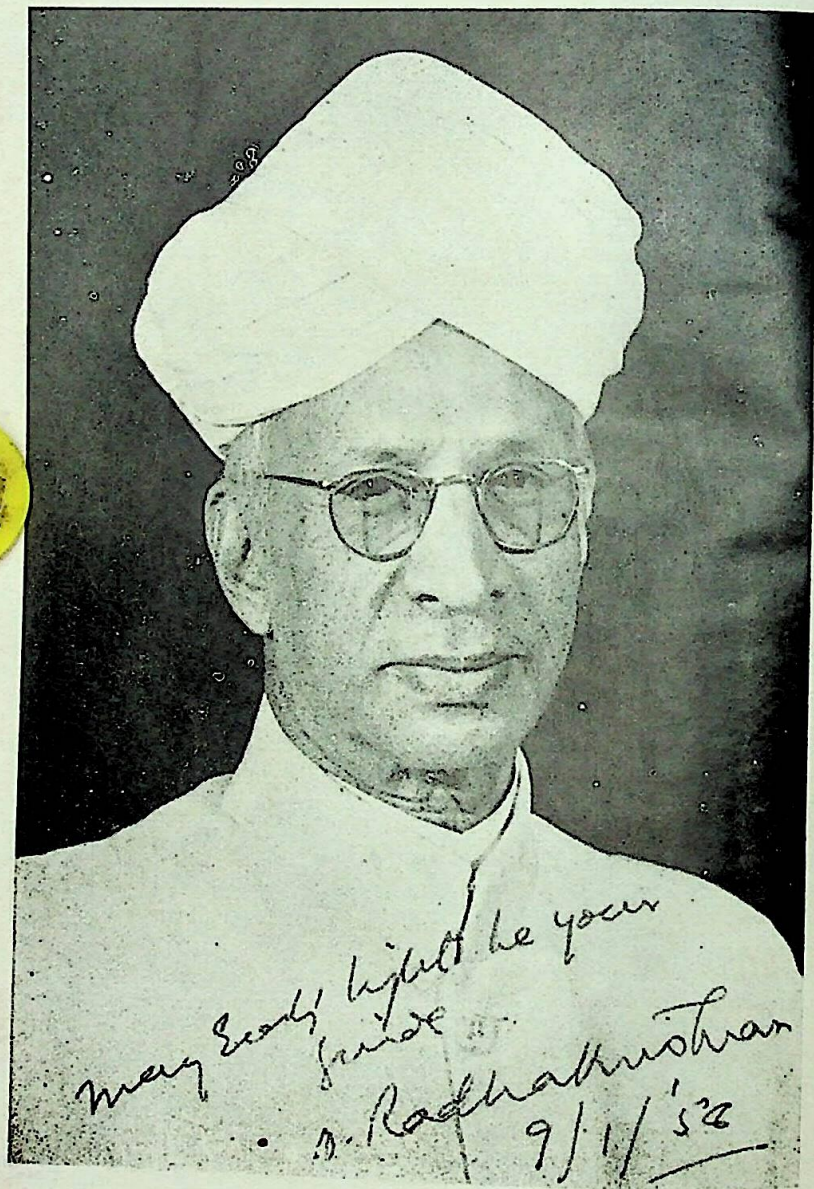
Vani Saraswati, Vani - Devi
 Baghavati Bharati Nam - Pahi
 Sri Sivananda. Vani is but an
 aspect of the Divine Mother. It
 is the Divine Mother who serves
 as the channel for the Lord's grace
 to flow, and for the Sadhak's
 devotion to reach Him. It is the
 Divine Mother who feeds the
 Lord's children with the milk of
 wisdom. That is the role that
 Sri Vani has done in this volume

When you glorify some one
 you glorify the Lord. He is the

Reality in all names and forms.
 The Biography inspires others
 to lead the divine life and
 attain self-realisation. If you
 emulate the example of a saint
 and follow the teachings
 contained in this inspiring
 volume, you will attain
 Sivan (auspiciousness) and
 Anandam (bliss).

May God bless you!
 May God bless Sri Vani

Sivanisivananda





VICE-PRESIDENT
INDIA

NEW DELHI

January 2, 1958

Shrimati V.S. Ram has written this book about her experiences in life and the great part played in it by Swami Sivananda. She has written about him with sincerity, devotion and enthusiasm. I have no doubt that those who read this book will be inspired to lead lives of austerity and service.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'S. Radhakrishnan'.

(S. Radhakrishnan)

Acknowledgments

In the end I cannot forget to offer my grateful thanks to all those who have helped me in bringing out this sacred volume.

My special thanks are due to Shri Swami Venkatesananda Maharaj for taking any amount of trouble in editing, proof reading, selecting the photographs, giving them suitable captions and doing every thing that was needed from that end.—To Swami Chidananda Maharaj, Swami Paramananda Maharaj and Shri Jnanananda Swami for very kindly giving their valuable opinions, and last but not the least to Shri A. B. Ganguly for his valuable services for very kindly seeing through the printing work in progress, the artistic cover design and the jacket for the book, but for whom the book could never have seen the light at all.

It is with awe and reverence I beg to express my grateful and very sincere heart-felt thanks to our beloved Vice-President of India, Dr. Sir S. Radhakrishnan for kindly sparing some time in the midst of his numerous engagements to go through my humble book and giving me such a remarkable Foreword for this book, "Children's Sivananda". I fully know I do not deserve all this. That shows his greatness.

Of course it is all my Guru Dev Swami Sivanandaji's "Kripa". Nothing will give me more joy and more contentment.

Every effort has been made to make this book useful, interesting and beneficial. As this book has been hurried through the press, the readers may find a few mistakes here and there, which may kindly be excused. They will be rectified in the second edition.

A Word

I feel it my duty to say a word of explanation for venturing to write something about a great saint like Sivananda Swami himself.

I am only a particle of dust under his holy feet. I have read very little of religious or philosophical literature. In my own humble and unscientific way I tried to grasp them as much as possible.

My complete faith and surrender unto my Guru Deva and my great regard and respect towards him, have helped me to bring out this book.

The many questions which were constantly put to me by so many persons — pressed me again and again to speak and say some facts to the divine children of the world. My anxiety is merely to tell the children of the universe, what noble service this great saint of the Himalayas is doing in the dissemination of spiritual knowledge and the revival of the decaying faith in the religious scriptures.

I crave the pardon of my readers if they find that I have exaggerated too much, and at the same time request them to take a trip to Rishikesh and see for themselves what it is, before they finally come to conclusions.

Do not suppose, gentle readers that it is my intention to preach and impute upon you any religion. It is simply with the object of creating interest among the mass, in our ancient scriptures through our great saint Swami Sivananda who is now amongst us.

I hope this book will prove useful in spreading Guru Dev's gospel and would make an interesting reading.

— Vanibai Ram.

(i)

ॐ

सद्गुरुस्तोत्रम्

ॐ ब्रह्मानन्दं परमसुखदं केवलं ज्ञानमूर्तिं
द्वन्द्वातीतं गगनसदृशं तत्त्वमस्यादिलक्ष्यम् ।
एकं नित्यं विमलमचलं सर्ववीक्षाक्षिभूतं
भावातीतं त्रिगुणरहितं सद्गुरुं तं नमामि ॥१॥

1. I prostrate myself before that Sad-Guru, the Brahman, who is Bliss, who is the giver of supreme happiness, who is the Absolute, who is the Form of Knowledge, who is beyond the pairs of opposites, who is (vast) like ether, who is attainable through assertions like 'Tat Twam Asi', who is one, eternal, pure and changeless, who is the witness of all the states of the mind, who transcends modifications, who is devoid of the three modes (of Prakriti).

गुरुर्ब्रह्मा गुरुर्विष्णु गुरुर्देवो महेश्वरः ।

गुरुः साक्षात् परं ब्रह्म तस्मै श्रीगुरुवे नमः ॥२॥

2. Prostration to that Sri-Guru, who is himself the gods Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshwara, and who is verily the supreme Absolute itself.

ॐ नमः शिवाय गुरुवे सच्चिदानन्द मूर्तये ।

निष्प्रपञ्चाय शान्ताय निरालम्बाय तेजसे ॥३॥

3. Om ! Prostration to the Guru, who is Siva (bliss and auspiciousness), who is the embodiment of Existence-Knowledge-Bliss, who is free from world-consciousness, who is peaceful, without (any other) support,* and self-effulgent.

(ii)

DHYANA SHLOKAS

स्तोत्राणि ॥ ॐकारस्तोत्रम् ॥

ॐकार निगमैकवेद्यमनिशं वेदान्ततत्त्वास्पदं
चोत्पत्तिस्थितिनाशहेतुममलं विश्वस्य विश्वात्मकम् ।
विश्वत्राणपरायणं श्रुतिशतैः संप्रोच्यमानं विभुं
सत्यज्ञानमनन्तमूर्तिममलं शुद्धात्मकं तं भजे ॥

I always contemplate upon the ever-pure, all-pervading OM-kara (Pranava), which can be known only through the Vedas, which is the essence and the support of the Vedanta, which is taintless, which is the cause of the creation, preservation and destruction of the universe, which includes the whole universe within itself, which is the saviour of the universe, which is proclaimed by countless Shrutis, and which is the Pure Truth, Knowledge and Infinity in one.

गणपतिस्तोत्रम् ॥

गजाननं भूतगणाधिसेवितं कपित्थजम्बूफलचारभक्षितम् ।
उमासुतं शोकविनाशकारणं नमामि विघ्नेश्वरपादपंकजम् ॥

I prostrate myself before the lotus-feet of Vighne-shwara, the son of Uma, the cause of the destruction of sorrow, who is served by the host of Bhuta-Ganas, etc., who has the face of an elephant, who partakes of the essence of Kapittha and Jambu fruits.

(iii)

विष्णुस्तोत्रम् ॥

शान्ताकारं भुजगशयनं पद्मनाभम् सुरेशं
 विश्वाधारं गगनसदृशं मेघवर्णम् शुभांगम् ।
 लक्ष्मीकांतं कमलनयनं योगिभिर्ध्यानिगम्य
 वन्दे विष्णुं भवभयहरं सर्वलोकैकनाथम् ॥

I adore Vishnu, the embodiment of Peace, who sleeps on the serpent, whose navel is the lotus (of the universe), who is the Lord of gods, who is the support of the universe, who is of the form of (the omnipresent) ether, whose colour resembles that of clouds, whose body is auspicious, who is the Lord of Lakshmi, whose eyes are like lotuses, who is attainable by Yogis through meditation, who is the destroyer of the fear of birth and death, and who is the One Lord of all the worlds.

सरस्वतीस्तोत्रम् ।

या कुन्देन्दुतुषारहारधवला या शुभ्रवस्त्रावृता
 या वीणावरदण्डमण्डितकरा या श्वेतपद्मासना ।
 या ब्रह्माच्युतशंकरप्रभृतिभिर्देवैः सदा पूजिता
 सा मां पातु सरस्वती भगवती निःशेषजाड्यापहा ॥

May that goddess Sarswati, who wears a garland white like the Kunda-flower or the moon or the snow, who is adorned with the pure white clothes, whose hands are ornamented with the Vina and the gesture of blessings, who is seated on a white lotus, who is always worshipped by Brahma, Vishnu, Siva and other gods, who is the remover of all inertness and laziness protect me.

(iv)

KAIVALYASHTAKAM

मधुरं मधुरेभ्योऽपि मंगलेभ्योऽपि मंगलम् ।
पावनं पावनेभ्योऽपि हरेर्नामैव केवलम् ॥१॥

*Madhuraṁ madhurebhyopi mangalebhyopi
mangalam;*

Pavanam pavanebhyopi harernamaiva kevalam.

1. Sweeter than all sweet things, more auspicious than all good things, purer than all pure things, is the Name of Hari only.

स गुरुः स पिता माता स भ्राता बान्धवोऽपि सः ॥
शिक्षयेच्चेत्सदा स्मर्तुं हरेर्नामैव केवलम् ॥२॥

*Sa guruh sa pitā mātā sa bhratā banohavopi sah;
Sikshāyetchetsadā smartum harernamaiva
kevalam.*

2. He alone is the teacher, father, mother, brother and relative who teaches the remembrance of Hari's Name.

अहो दुःखं महादुःखं दुःखाद्दुःखतरं यतः ।
काचार्यं विस्मृतं रत्नं हरेर्नामैव केवलम् ॥३॥

*Aho dukham mahadukham dukkhaḍ dukkhatarm
yatah;*

*Kaachaartyam vismritam ratnam harernamaiva
kevalam.*

3. It is a matter of great sorrow, greatest of all miseries, that for the sake of the outer shell (of worldly enjoyments) the precious jewel of Hari's Name is forgotten.

Universal Prayer

O Adorable Lord of Mercy and Love
Salutations and prostrations unto Thee.
Thou art Satchidananda.

Omnipresent, Omnipotent, Omniscient;
Thou art the Indweller of all beings.

Grant us an understanding heart,
Equal, vision, balanced mind,
Faith, devotion and wisdom.

Grant us inner spiritual strength
To resist temptation and to control the mind.
Free us from egoism, lust, greed and hatred.

Fill our hearts with divine virtues.

Let us behold Thee in all these names and forms.

Let us serve Thee in all these names and forms.

Let us ever remember Thee.

Let us ever sing Thy Glories.

Let Thy Name be ever on our lips.

Let us abide in Thee for ever and ever.

Om.

O Supreme Love ! Ominipotent Lord !

Strengthen my resolve to stick to the Spiritual path and do my daily routine vigorously and regularly. Forgive my sins. Free me from all obstacles in the path and give me inner strength to resist temptations !

Give me Light and Wisdom. Crores and crores of Prostrations unto thee O Lord !

I am Thine. Save me, Protect me, guide me, and enlighten me. Make me pure, perfect and free. Through Thy grace may all attain health, long life worldly Prosperity and Self-Realisation !



Late Dr. V.S. Ram

o

Late Dr. V. S. Ram

A Brief Life-sketch

Vangala Shiva Ram was born on the 29th March 1895 of a pious Brahmin family in the village Attili in West Godavary District, Andhra Desa. He had two sisters and one brother.

He received his early schooling at a small local school in that village. From his childhood Shiva Ram was very fond of reading and competing with the other children of the school. He borrowed books from his school mates during the nights and read and learnt everything by heart by morning, sitting till very late in the nights under the street lamps which were dim, finished his lessons and thus earned the admiration of his teachers. His parents had given all that they could, and were unable to do anything more to this young lad. Their anxiety was to see at least one son settled nicely in life.

Shiva Ram went to Madras to appear for the Intermediate Examination from the Christian College along with his elder brother (who went over to Madras to do his LL.B.) He walked to the College barefooted in the hot sun on tar-roads; such was his zeal for study!—and passed the examination standing first to the great joy of his teachers.

When he was in Madras, a keen and intense desire arose in him to go to some foreign country for further studies. But he knew it was well nigh impossible; for neither his parents nor his elder brother were in a position to send him abroad. But God willed it otherwise.

His brother had to go to Billimoria in Bombay State, on some business, and took Shiva Ram also with him. The young boy was dissatisfied with the work allotted to him; and his ambition to study further made him run away several times from home—but he was always brought back by his people.

This young boy who was destined to become a renowned professor of international fame, would not remain satisfied with what he had, and became very restless. He sought a way out.

One day an old Gujarati businessman came to meet his brother and told him that he intended to go to Japan to buy some machinery and that he was on the look-out for someone who knew English, who would be able to guide him. Young Shiva Ram who was overhearing their conversation quietly walked to the old businessman's house, without his brother's knowledge and spoke to him boldly, offering himself as an escort and guide. The old gentleman explained to the boy all the difficulties ahead and warned him sufficiently to prevent him from entertaining such fruitless ideas. The boy was full of courage. He was not shaken.

Both of them started for Japan. Unfortunately, the old Gujarati gentleman suffered intensely from sea-sickness and was frightened. He did not want to proceed any further and begged of Shiva Ram to take him back to Bombay. Shiva Ram who was about sixteen years old at that time, requested the old gentleman, in his turn, to let him continue the voyage alone, as the ticket had already been taken, and also to lend him Rs. 500 for his expenses, offering to repay double or even treble that amount, if he was successful in his mission. The old gentleman was sympathetic and gave Shiva Ram the amount asked for and blessed him for his success. Shiva Ram joyously put the old man on a return steamer and continued his voyage, to fulfil his mission in life which he had cherished ever since his childhood.

He spent a few days in Tokyo in Japan and bought a ticket for America in a cargo boat as a Deck Passenger, and landed in that foreign land, not knowing exactly where to go or what to do. Wherever he went to rest, he was turned out. He could not get even water to drink, without paying for it. That was not India !

At last, somehow Shiva Ram reached the Hostel where many Indian students were residing. They were very kind and helped him in every possible way.

In the beginning he had to face some difficulties. He worked in houses as a part-time worker, and attended the university. He

even tilled the land for some time. He worked in cinema houses too.

In a very short time, young Shiva Ram was able to make himself very popular. He won prizes in debates, essay competitions, swimming and other sports. He received many scholarships. All his professors were pleased with him and were all admiration for him. He won the goodwill of everyone. He graduated himself at the University of California and subsequently took his M.A. and Ph.D. at the Harvard University (1918 and 1920). After a further study at Emmanuel College in Cambridge, England, he returned to India and was appointed lecturer in Political Science at the Calcutta University. Sir Ashutosh Mukerji who was the then Vice-Chancellor, of the Calcutta University, liked him for his push and ability and helped him to rise up.

Dr. V. S. Ram (Shiva Ram) was the first man to start Political Science as a subject of study in the Indian universities. When he was at Calcutta, he returned all the money with gratitude to the old Gujarati gentleman who was immensely pleased to see the young boy whom he had helped in time of need.

For about eight long years Shiva Ram was away from home and his relations. He then went to his village to see his parents to whom he was regularly writing from America. He then married an Andhra girl at Masulipatam (daughter of Mutnuri Krishna Rao Garu, a

well known Congress leader) and brought them all to Calcutta. He was at Calcutta only for two years. He then joined the staff of the Lucknow University as the Head of the Department of Political Science, a post which he held till his death. His first wife died in 1928, leaving a daughter behind.

Dr. V. S. Ram married Vani Bai in May 1929.

From 1935 to 1937, Dr. Ram was a member of the Trusteeship Council of the League of Nations. Between 1943 and 1945, he went on deputation as Secretary of the Indian Institute of International Affairs at New Delhi. In Lucknow itself he was the President of the Rotary Club, Masonic Lodge and International Club, etc. and presided over many conferences. He was made a full professor in the year 1938; he was the seniormost professor of the Lucknow University.

Dr. Ram was also the author of several books. Most of which are prescribed as text books and reference books in different universities. Of all his works special mention may be made about "Comparative Colonial Policy", "Modern Governments", "India and the League of Nations" and "Political Theory".

Dr. Ram was also religious-minded and visited many *Ashramas* and shrines. He had the *Darshan* of Shri Ramana Maharishi, Shri Ma-Ananda Mayi and Shri Swami Sivananda also during his life-time.

He was in correspondence with Shri Swami Sivananda who used to send him books on Yoga and philosophy for his study. He made Bequethes to the universities of Lucknow, Benares, Andhra and Harvard, as well as to his village school at Attili, in the West Godavary District.

He had a paralytic stroke in his 54th year and after a brief illness, passed away on 12th January, 1951, at Lucknow. He was cremated in the Lucknow University grounds, on the banks of the Gomati river, with full honours. He leaves behind his wife, four sons and three daughters.

May his soul rest in the *Param Dham*.

Sivananda Vani

Born in the year 1914 at Guntur in Andhra Desa, Vani Bai was the only child of her parents. She lost her mother when she was yet a baby. Her father brought her up with great care and affection. Her father Shri Late Dasu Madhava Rao garu, was a leading lawyer at Ellore at that time, and later on at Bezwada, Andhra Desa.

Vani Bai belongs to a highly cultured Brahmin family of Andhra Desa. Her father chose to name her as "Vani", after the Goddess of Music and Learning, as he found in her the inborn qualities suited to music even when she was a small baby.

Her grand-father also a Vakil, was a reputed Sanskrit scholar, a singer and was the author of Devi Bhagavatam and several Sanskrit and Telugu "Granthas". He was the composer of many songs and Kritis, of Andhra Desa. His name was Pundit Dasu Sreerama Kavi. He was a great adept in "Abhinaya Shastra", which in those days was considered very strange for a man of his status. He was one of the first who introduced Abhinaya Shastra in high class families.

Vani Bai has undoubtedly inherited her musical talents from her late grand-father and also her mother Meenakshi who had a fine voice and was able to sing moderately.

Vani Bai was very fond of listening to good music from her childhood and used to persuade her father Madhava Rao garu to take her to all the music Sabhas.

She has received training in Karnatak music systematically for a number of years at Bezwada from the noted Andhra musician, late Sri "Gayaka Sarvabhuma" Parupalli Ramakrishnayya Pantulu, and mastered it well. She was giving performances at Bezwada, Ellore, Masulipatam and Madras as a little girl, several years ago.

Later on in the year 1929 May, she married Dr. V. S. Ram of Lucknow University. Immediately after her marriage her husband who was the first Indian to receive the Carnegie Fellowship endowment for a further study in Europe, took her to Europe, for a year. During that time she visited all the countries in Europe and also learnt some Western Music (violin) at Paris and Vienna.

After about a year when she returned to India with her husband in August, 1930 for the first time to Lucknow, she wanted to do some course in Hindustani Music also. And with that desire, she joined the Marris College of Hindustani Music at Lucknow. She had an opportunity then to meet the late Shri Pt. Bhatkandeji who was there on a short visit and had the privilege of singing before him.

When she finished her 3rd year course in Hindustani music she had to leave for Europe,

where her late husband Dr. V. S. Ram was appointed as a Political Affairs Officer in the League of Nations. Dr. V. S. Ram who was the Professor and the Head of the Department of Political Science, Lucknow University, served the League of Nations till July 1937, for a period of nearly (two & a half) years and had to return to India when the World War II broke out. On his return, Dr. Ram rejoined the Lucknow University.

Vani Bai Ram who was very keen to finish her five years course of Music then joined the College again and in course of time she succeeded in finishing her fifth year course, i.e. "Sangeeta Visharada", under the able guidance of Sri Pundit S. N. Ratanjankar.

Later on she joined the Post-graduate course in Music under Sri Ratanjankarji, but unfortunately had to give it up before completion due to domestic mishaps.

Vani Bai has four sons and three daughters. In the year 1951 January Mrs. Ram had to face a great blow—an irreparable loss—in the sudden and premature death of her husband Dr. Ram. She became grief stricken and disturbed. Her sorrow was eating her up. When Lo, her prayers helped her. Swami Sivananda's books came to her rescue. She visited the Ashram of Sivanandajee for Swamiji's "darshan," to have "Shanti". She spent a few months there. She took Sivananda Swami as her Guru and benefactor. Swamiji's teachings and his magnanimous compassion had

completely transformed her. She became a new person with new spirit and new energy. Swamiji ordered her to do her duties and to have some occupation to keep her mind busy and make her cheerful.

Since then God has been helping her in every way. Children also are coming up nicely and there is nothing lacking for her. She is comfortable and contented. Her eldest son Lt. V. Madhava Prasad is an Army Officer and is settled in life. Her second son Jaya Ram, who is remarkably brilliant, received merit Scholarships and has done his M.A. and Ph. D. (in sociology) at the Cornell University, U.S.A. and has been appointed as the Social Affairs Officer at the United Nations in New York. He is now 22 and is the youngest officer to be appointed in the United Nations.

Her daughter Mohini who is now a graduate, is also a pious and religious-minded girl like her mother.

Amarnath, Badrinath and Padmini are her younger children, who are also undergoing studies in their respective classes.

Mrs. Ram has nothing to worry, and God is directing her in every possible way and she has completely surrendered herself to her great Guru Sivananda.

Swami Sivananda has re-named her as Sivananda-Vani and is leading and guiding her nicely in the spiritual Path.

Sivananda Vani from her childhood was God-fearing. She is a great devotee of Swami Sivananda and has earned his most precious spiritual grace. She is one of the few foremost disciples of Shree Guru Dev in her devotion.

She believes in doing real Seva by remaining in the mundane world keeping her heart pure, discharging her duties towards her children, moving with everyone, serving her Guru to the best of her ability and doing charity.

She has constructed a small Hanuman temple in her village and a small town hall in the same village, where a school for poor children is running during the day, and in the evenings people meet.

She has constructed rooms in Ashrams including Sivanandashram, and has donated large amounts to various Universities, and is helping very poor children by giving them their school fees and books.

She is working at present as the Producer (Music) in the All-India Radio, New Delhi.

May she continue her humanitarian services to the children of God with more and more zeal and enthusiasm !

“Sarve Janaa Sukhino Bhavanthu ! May all be happy” !!

Publishers.

Publishers' Note

The versatile genius of Sri Vani gives us an entrancing picture of Bhagavan Sivananda. The sage's life is an open book, a living scripture which every true seeker after Truth ought to study devoutly, assimilate thoroughly and endeavour to emulate sincerely. Well has it been said :

*Smritir Vibhinna Smritayo-api Bhinnah
Tathaa Muneenaam Matayo-api Bhinnah
Dharmasya Tattvam Nihitam Guhaayaam
Mahaajano Yena Gatah Sa Panthaa*

स्मृतिर्विभिन्ना स्मृतयोऽपि भिन्नाः ।
तथा मुनीनाम् मतयोऽपि भिन्नाः ॥
धर्मशिया तत्त्वम् निहितम् गुहायाम् ।
महाजनो येन गतः स पन्थाः ॥

What is right and what is wrong ? What is the correct path to the goal of life ? What is Truth and how shall we realise it ? Answers to these fundamental questions vary so widely that the seeker gets bewildered ; and, when an explanation is sought for these knotty problems, it only succeeds in creating new ones. It is at this critical juncture that the life of one who has actually trodden the Path and reached the goal comes to our rescue and guides us step by step, on our onward march. Where we might falter, the sage's life serves as a staff. When the way ahead is shrouded

in the darkness of despair and gloom, it is the life of a man-of-God, the inspiring story of his triumphs over the formidable enemies of the divine in man, that acts as a powerful light to lead us on.

Many a Ramanuja has called us aloud from house-tops ; many a Sankara has toured the length and breadth of the country proclaiming the message of life divine ; today Sri Guru Bhagavan, the fulfilment of all sages and saints of India, the living God on earth, knocks at the very door of every man and woman in the world with his million subtle far-reaching hands—his pamphlets, journals, and books—with a sweet song and a cup of divine elixir. Ignorant man slumbers on. Till... ...the loving mother gently awakens him.

Here is our Mother Vani who loves the entire humanity as her own children who gently and lovingly reminds us what a divine blessing awaits us in the Divine Person of Bhagavan Sri Swami Sivananda. She has poured her heart out for our sake. How shall we repay the debt we owe to her ? By crowding round the lotus-feet of Sri Guru Bhagavan, by following his footsteps, by practising Sadhana and leading the life divine.

P. O. Shivananda Nagar.

4th October, 1957.

Vijayadasami Day.

Publishers

शिवानन्दवाणी

Shri Swami Jnananda Sarswati,
Ananda Kutir

- (1) भवातङ्कहन्त्री सदाचारनेत्री
शिवप्रीतिसंभूतदिव्यप्रभावा
नवानन्ददात्री जगत्क्षेमकर्त्री
शिवानन्दवाणी चिरं भातु धन्या
- (2) अवयवार्थपूर्णा कृतीन्द्राभिनन्द्या
सुवर्णोज्ज्वलाङ्गी सुभाषाभिरामा
अवकाशया भातु बोधप्रदात्री
स्तवार्हा विशिष्टा शिवानन्दवाणी
- (3) सदा लोककल्याणकृत्यैकलोला
सदाचारमार्गान् जनान् बोधयन्ती
मुदाधाररूपा भृशं विश्वभव्य
प्रदा भातु धन्या शिवानन्दवाणी

Foreword

"Children's Sivananda" makes every reader see Sivananda in the same light. The authoress enjoys the rarest combination of several gifts—an understanding heart, a discerning intellect, a keen insight, persuasive expression and an appealing method of presentation.

The sage is one with the Infinite. He cannot be easily understood by the finite intellect. Hence we find that numerous attempts have been made to deal with the eventful life and divine personality of Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, each one viewing him from a particular angle. A Journalist, a European, a Sanyasin, a devout householder, an earnest spiritual aspirant, a European lady clairvoyant and organiser, another lady endowed with mystic experiences—have all presented the life and personality of Sri Swamiji Maharaj. Each of these presentations certainly appeal to a vast section of humanity.

Srimathi Vani Bai's presentation is unique in the sense that the authoress combines in herself many excellences and integrates in herself several personalities of eminence. Sri Vani is a renowned artiste, well-versed both in the Karnatic and Hindustani systems of music; she is a very good and able organiser and administrator; she is the wife of a Professor of international fame and the mother of seven highly intelligent and brilliant child-

ren who have been brought up almost entirely under her care and guidance. She has travelled widely and settled down in North India, far from her ancestral home. All these factors have given her a very wide vision, the rare gift of viewing men and matters from diverse angles, and present a picture that would at once appeal to the maximum number of people in the world.

In this biography of the Master, therefore, the reader will discover his own view-point ably presented. Those who have not met the sage yet would be inspired at once to take a trip to Rishikesh and have the darshan of the saint. Srimathi Vani's selections of the teachings of Sri Swamiji Maharaj, are precious luminous gems that illumine the path of Man to peace, plenty and prosperity, joy, bliss and immortality. I am sure that everyone who peruses this work will be transformed into a better citizen of the world, an ideal spiritual aspirant, and in proper time into a saint, Yogi and sage.

The whole world must be indebted to Srimati Vani Bai for this inestimable gift of hers. May the choicest blessings of God and Sri Swamiji Maharaj be upon her !

Swami Paramananda

Introduction

Mother Vani Bai's inspiring biography of Sri Gurudev is a treasure for all. All are children of the Lord; all are but little children walking the path of divine life with tottering steps. Everyone—every child of the Lord—will derive incalculable benefit, therefore, from a devout study of the mother's words of life-transforming wisdom.

Yet, this is a book specially meant for the children—the young boys and girls, and the youth. Sri Gurudev who is a saint of cosmic love has, yet, a very soft corner in his heart for the young ones. In them he sees a virgin field which, if sown with the spiritual seed, will yield a rich harvest of world peace and prosperity, a new civilisation based on goodwill and love, recognising the brotherhood of man and the Fatherhood of One God.

Sri Vani Mataji is, above all, a mother par excellence. Anyone who has had the least acquaintance with her brilliant and saintly children will readily agree that she is best qualified to advise the youth of today on the best way to grow up into saintly and powerful personalities, not only achieving success in every undertaking here in this world, but winning at the same time an immortal place in the heart of mankind and the lap of God.

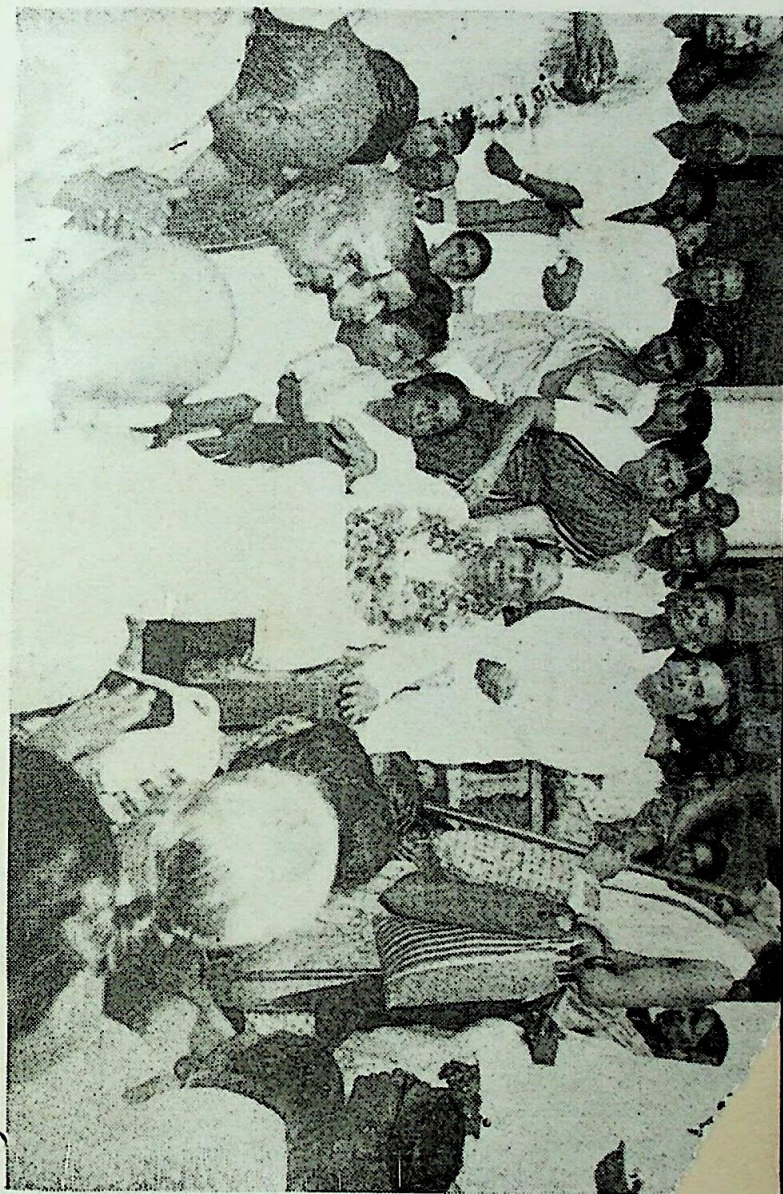
When she tells you what a glorious saint Sri Gurudev is, she means to exhort you to grow into his image. When she relays to you

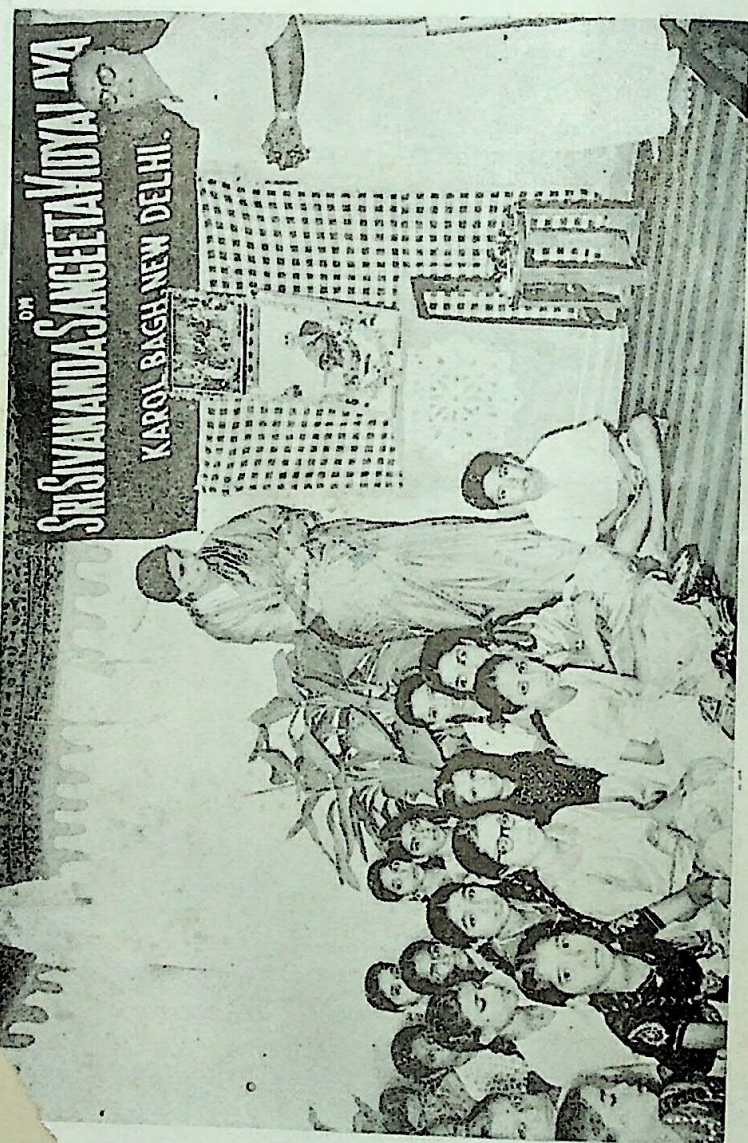
his immortal message of profound wisdom, she appeals to you to assimilate it into your life and soul, and to let his teachings guide your footsteps. Thus shall you—every one of you—attain success in this very life, and God-realisation in this very birth, here and now.

Success in life is to God-realisation what shadow is to substance. If you get at the substance, need you strive again to catch the shadow? Become a saint. Success in every field will follow you. All prosperity, glory and happiness will be added unto you. That is the message of Mother Vani Bai. That is the Immortal Divine Call of Sri Gurudev, which is echoed on every page of this interesting, inspiring and instructive volume. May you all grow into saints and sages! May God bless you all!

Swami Chidananda

Gurudev with his disciples at the time of 'Satsanga'





Mrs. Ram presiding at the opening ceremony of the Sivananda Sangeeta Kendra, Karol Bagh, New Delhi

Sivananda

The greatest Saint.

Shri. Vani's Presidential speech on the occasion of the
opening ceremony of Sivananda Sangeeta Vidyalaya
at Karol Bagh New Delhi

Glorious Immortal Atmans,

I consider it a great honour and privilege to pay my humble Prostrations and Tributes to the Greatest Saint, our Guru Dev Sri Swami Sivanandaji Maharaj, here, this evening. As you all know we are to-day celebrating the auspicious and most glorious day of our Guru Dev here. The founder Director of this Sangeeta Vidyalaya Mr. V. Rajamani Iyer is himself a great Sadhak and devotee of Swamiji. Knowing all the difficulties he had to face in starting this institution for the benefit of the South Indian Community, he boldly stood up with firm faith, collected students and started this institution. Ever since its inception in 1952, the above Vidyalaya is progressing under his able guidance, many students in vocal and instrumental music have been progressing well. This year, with Shri Guru Dev's blessings, he has renamed the school as "Sri Sivananda Sangeeta Vidyalaya". Where there is Swamiji's name and grace, there is success, peace and prosperity. So, there is nothing lacking in this institution. Saint Thyagaraja's Day and

Sri Dikshitar's Day are celebrated every year. Now it has been decided to celebrate the great Day of Vijaya Dasami every year as "Sri Guru Dev's Day" for his remembrance and blessings. As usual it will be the Prize Distribution Day of the Vidaylaya.

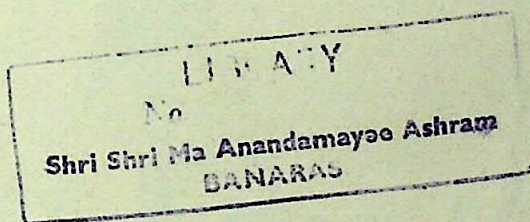
As most of you know our Swamiji is a living manifestation of spiritual genius. He is one of those who has devoted his life to selfless service and welfare of the world. He radiates joy and Spiritual Light-Rays and hence transforms the entire outlook of the visitor at a mere glance. His tremendous influence of winning every one alike is something unique. He is a "Jeevanmukta" and has no other wish to be in this world than to work for the benefit of mankind, imparting Spiritual training and showing the world the path to Salvation.

Swamiji is known as Sankirtan Samrat. He is very fond of Music. He encourages people to learn Music and perform concerts. He says Music is a Divine Vidya which is the one medium to approach God. Guru Dev says, we can spread the spiritual Divine Message easily through Music. He wants all to utilise this precious human birth usefully in Japa, Kirtan, Geeta-Path and Ramayan—Reading, offering all our actions to the Lord, and not wasting our time uselessly in idle gossip. He receives everyone alike. He encourages Children to learn Music by giving them Certificates and Diplomas.—Let us all pray that

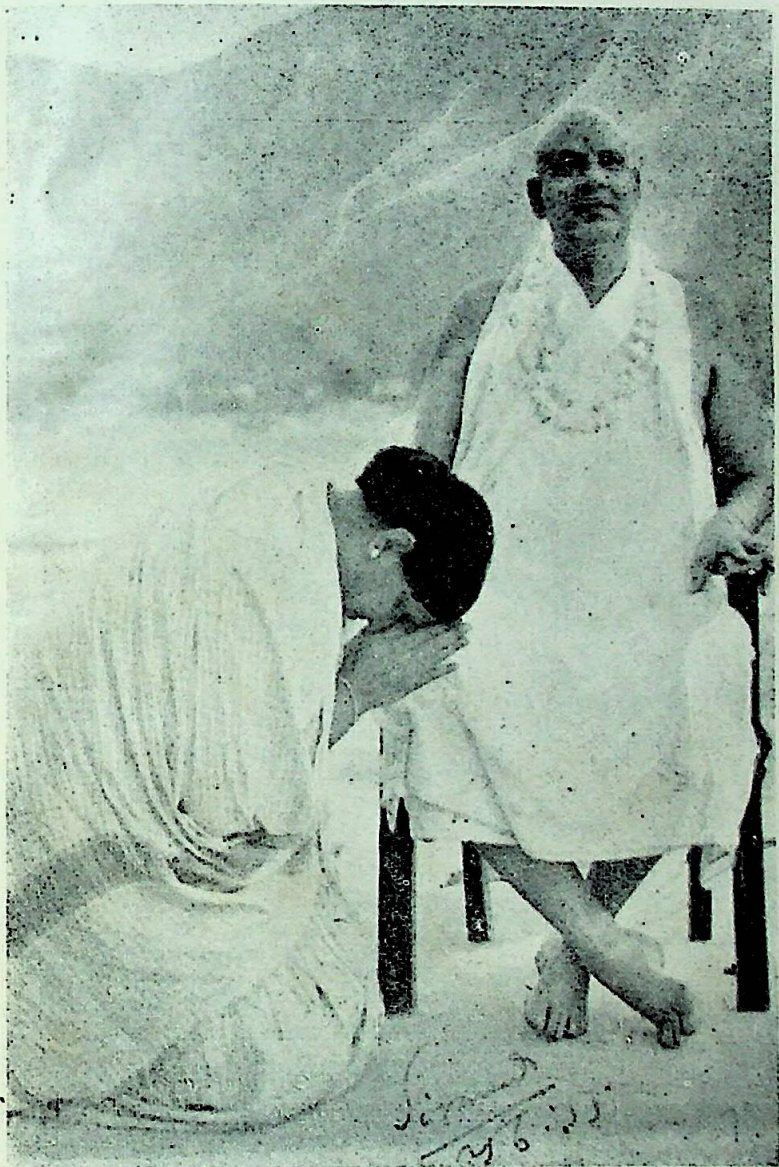
this Institution, with the Holy Blessings of Swamiji, may grow into great (Sivananda) Music University moving towards Spiritual progress and enlightenment.

In conclusion, I can only say, I do not deserve this honour of presiding over a holy function like this. I offer my grateful thanks to Sri Rajamani Iyer for bringing me here to preside over this function. I congratulate all those who have received Prizes this evening. Let us all Pray that our Sat Guru Dev may be spared for many more years to come to guide mankind towards the Realisation of God.

OM TAT SAT.



CHILDREN'S. SIVANANDA



Humble homage at the feet of Gurudeva



*Sivananda Vani and Sivananda Chellamma
offering homage to Gurudeva*

To my own Divine

GURU DEV

Prostations, salutations, adorations and Sashtanga Pranams to thy Holy divine feet GURU DEV. You have given new life, new energy, new way of thinking and transformed me completely.

When I lost all that I possessed in this world, and was thrown out as useless, unwanted creature by this world, You, my saviour, came to my rescue, picked me up from this illusory-*maya*-world, and have placed me in the highest pinnacles of hope, eternity and knowledge of bliss.

You, my Master, have taught me: balance of mind, discipline, detachment, unrivalled devotion towards my guru, seva bhav, and above all remembrance of Lord at all times. I am a seeker after the Lord. I see my God in you, my Guru Bhagawan.

All my sorrows and depressions have vanished. I have more courage, more strength and more spiritual yearning now, than ever before. You are my awakener, my spiritual guide, and my all-pervading consciousness, and the most magnanimous and dynamic yogi. I am drowned in ecstasy in the flood of ever increasing devotion and faith.

I consider myself extremely fortunate and lucky to be able to bow down and touch your sacred lotus feet with this sinful head. What a joy! What a thrill; What inspiration to receive your most valuable instructions written in your own hand, in a letter form !

My Swami Sivananda, accept my endless salutations. Do I deserve so much sympathy from the greatest SAINT ! ?

Your compassion and large-heartedness have sometimes made me forget you are my divine Master and made me venture to talk to you as I would address any-body else. Please, my Master, pardon me for that.

My merciful Master and Lord, your invisible hand is always by my side and is helping me at every step and stage.

I cannot help talking about my divine Master Sivananda to everyone that happens to come and see me. To talk about you is a privilege and a source of immense joy to me.

There is no other room for any other thought but you in my heart. I have built a temple in my heart for my beloved God-like Guru Dev, and have seated him on the soft Cushion-like heart of mine.

Swamiji, I have undergone several tests by you, and have seen many wonderful miracles happen, to the astonishment of everyone. I regard you as my benefactor, compassionate Master, loving father, a glorious Guru, and above all my God. Your magnanimous,

charitable hand, compassionate heart and sweet nature, have made me drink the sweetest nectar of "Ram-Ram" with the essence of Vairagya mixed in it, in the cup of Purity and perfection and Humility.

When I come to you, my Swamiji, at thy holy abode, I derive the pleasure of visiting the Vaikuntha loka. To see you in your office, is like seeing Narayana Himself in the heaven. To hear you sing the Kirtans and your English Compositions, is like listening to the sweet enchanting notes of Lord Shri Krishna's flute. Your melodious, superb, thrilling voice draws us nearer you and electrifies the whole body with holy vibrations....To sit near you, gazing at thy beautiful divine form, one gets into raptures of Ananda, throwing pearls of wisdom on all those sitting around thee.

SIVA, you are my support. Without you, I am nothing. You are the inspiration within me.

You are our immortal divine Priceless treasure and guide. Your captivating speeches, surpassing everything else, acts like a balm to the depressed and the disappointed souls.

My Prabhu, the few lines of thy inspiring message are always ringing in my ears :

Serve, love, give, purify, meditate, realize.

Be good, do good, be kind, be compassionate.

Enquire who am I, know the Self and be free.

Adapt, adjust, accommodate.

Bear injury, bear insult, highest Sadhana.

*Find the hearer, find the seer, find the knower,
You are not this body, not this mind,
Immortal Self you are.*

* * * * *

*Eat a little, drink a little.
Talk a little, move a little.
Serve a little, rest a little.
Reflect a little, do Vichar a little.
Kirtan a little, Japa a little.
Meditate a little.*

* * * * *

And the Maha Mrityunjaya Mantra, which is a life giving-Mantra. *Hari Om Tat Sat.* What beautiful lines ! If only every one of us can just repeat and follow and regularise our daily programme according to these honey-like words, there will be an end of misery, sorrow and evil in this world.

Swami Maharaj, people are all eagerly waiting to read the story of my beloved Master Sivananda. I can write volumes and volumes of my own experiences about Gurudev, some other time. For the time being, I pray Gurudev to grant me permission to tell my eager readers all about thee.....my gracious divine and compassionate Gurudev's story and his glorious lilas.....

Swami Maharaj, please forgive me for all my short comings. My heart is filled with Sivanandism.

Sivanandeti Sada Snanam
Sivanandeti Sada Japam
Sivanandeti Sada Dhyanam
Sadaiva Siva Kirtanam.....

OM

Thy Humble Sevika
Always at your feet,
SIVANANDA VANI

My Supreme Lord

Gurudev is my Supreme Lord,
So precious, so sweet, like a God,
Filling my thoughts with divine deeds.
Makes me happy giving my needs.
He taught me to repeat Ram-Ram.
Making my soul peaceful and calm.
To the tattered mind he gave
Shelter, cheer, blissful wave.
Clinging (to his feet) I crave for mercy,
To reach my goal with ecstasy.

Pranams

Crores of Pranams to thee, my Lord,
To thy lotus feet so soft,
Accept this humble devotees' pranams,
Showering thy blessings in all the forms.
Lead me with your light divine,
Throwing thy radiant grace to shine.
I bow my head in reverence, Master,
And seek your forgiveness for all that past.
In the silent nights I sit
Praying for mercy like a gift.
On this day of joy, I beg
God Almighty to come and shed
All the years in the world
On my beloved Gurudev Lord.

SECTION—I
SIVANANDA AND HIS ASPECTS

CHAPTER ONE

The Divine Wisdom

Come one, Come all, Children of the Lord! Come, and I shall narrate to you one of the most fascinating stories of a great Saint who lives in the far off Himalayas, and yet, in the hearts of his Bhaktas. He is a Saint of unbounded compassion and love. He is a Jeevanmukta, a realized sage and a Brahma Jnani.

Even to hear something about this great Sage will surely radiate joy and peace in the hearts of the listeners.

Do you know, Children, his aim is to spread: good conduct, spirit of service, religion, constant remembrance of Lord's name, in each and every one, (study of Holy Scriptures,) and to drive away evil and undesirable elements in man, and to make every one perfect citizens of the world.

Human beings as we are, we are liable to be caught up in the trap of ignorance egoism, and materialistic love, which is not permanent, and may be dragged hither and thither by money, power, sensual indulgence and various other human weaknesses. Swamiji says: "Hear not the voice of the lower mind which deludes you. Listen to the voice of the Soul, which gives you correct advice and lifts you up and takes you to the goal."

In the present age when everything else but God seems real, it is very difficult to impress upon the Public the right way of thinking and inculcate the divine qualities, and to prove that He only exists”.

In this Kaliyuga, (iron age) the percentage of evil is much more than at any other time. One cannot get a solution to this except through Service of humanity Japa, Kirtan and meditation, right conduct and the realization of God.

Do you think, Children, of the Lord, that you have to go to a cave, or sit under a tree bare-bodied, or stand on one leg in the mid-stream to realize God?!

No. God is Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Omniscient and all pervading Satchidananda Swaroopa. He sees, through our eyes. How can you know the knower of knowledge?

To realize God is to identify yourself with Brahman, to kill the Vasanas, and to give up the illusory physical happiness, false ideas of I and mine, attachment for wealth, family and other objects.

So, my dear, immortal Children, Swamiji Maharaj has come to us in this form to purify our minds, to wash away the Ajnana mala in us, to help us to crush our egoism, and to teach us the knowledge of Atman, and to ultimately make us realise the Antaryami.

Become free from the cycle of births and deaths by realizing thy Self.

Divine Children, as Swamiji says, there is nothing impossible in this world. Trust not your body and the senses. Develop Vairagya and do Sadhana. As is the desire, so is the fruit of action. Money and fame fill our minds only with vanity. Be detached from everything. Accept whatever comes to you cheerfully. Swamiji says "Be established in a life of virtue. Have minimum comforts. Learn tolerance. Try to percieve the glorious ideals of Saints, and judge your actions by comparing with their standards."

This is the greatest undertaking which will raise you to the highest spiritual attainments. Only this will reveal the mystery of life to you.

- -

CHAPTER TWO

A Short, life-Sketch of

Swami Sivananda

Oh! Children, please, do not be impatient. You want to know why I have taken so long to explain to you the fundamental needs of divine virtues to lead an ideal life for attaining God realization.

Unless I give you some idea of the preliminary moral teachings of peace and love, how can you understand the life and teachings of this dynamic Sage of India, our spiritual teacher Swami Sivananda?

Yes, listen, Children of immortality, this great Saint, my beloved Master, took his birth in a small place, called Pattamadai on the holy banks of river Tambraparani, in South India. The most auspicious and sacred day was the 8th of September 1887. His mother was Shri Paravathiamma and his father was Shri Vengu Iyer. This little baby was named Kuppuswami. He belongs to the family of Appayya Dixitar, a highly cultured, scholarly, orthodox line. Kuppu Swami, being the youngest in the family, was the pet, and was line fondled by all.

He was a brilliant boy in the school, and always stood first in the class. His friends

used to worship him. He always had a generous and loving nature. His teachers also liked him. He was good at games and other sports.

Young Kuppu Swami passed his matriculation examination at the age of sixteen, and joined the medical college at Tanjore. With his spirit of service ingrained in him, he was successful in his medical line and soon became a doctor. He was for some time the editor of a medical magazine, at Trichinopoly.

He proceeded to Malaya to serve the sick and poor as a Hospital Doctor there. He started his career with zeal and enthusiasm, never heard of before. He cured the incurable. He was the friend of the poor. Even in those days, he treated them free of any fee and charged the rich only to serve the poor with those earnings. He helped everyone in the best possible way. He had the power of curing diseases with his kind and sweet words.

His charitable nature made him spend all that he was earning. He was having a lucrative practice, and was the most efficient doctor in that land, known commonly as the "Dayardra Hridaya". Even then, he would serve milk, fruits and other needs to the poor and depressed without any discrimination.

RENUNCIATION

A call from the Lord to lead a life of service and dedication stirred the heart of this noble Doctor.

This turned him completely sick of home, relations and the surroundings, and made him decide to lead the life of a mendicant, bidding good-bye to family ties. Thus he was destined to become the greatest Saint, a modern Prophet, and a compassionate loving father to all.

Who could understand then that this young physician was born to lead these millions of people? A Doctor who could serve only a few hundreds by curing physical ailments, is now serving millions all over the world by curing mental sicknesses!

Dr. Kuppaswami quietly walked out of the house one night like Lord Buddha, relinquishing all his worldly enjoyments, to plunge into this vast world, with no thought of what he would become or where he was going.

1922 was the important year, when he left his home with only some bare necessities, and roamed about first all over the South Indian Pilgrim centers, and gradually came to the North; Benares and other holy shrines. Sometimes he walked and sometimes he travelled by train whichever was possible. He always carried with him a "jhola", (bag) full of medicines, and some nuts or "misri" to be distributed for the Sadhus. With only these and a small brass bucket, and a "danda", (stick) he walked up to Kailas, Badrinath, Kedarnath, and all other Punya Kshetras, (Holy places) not caring for the hardships,

giving discourses on Yoga and Gita. Temples gave him shelter. He lived on alms got from the kind Pilgrims. He slept on pavements, under the trees or in caves. His Kirtans and divine praises, comforted and protected him.

At last, after visiting all the holy shrines in India, in the year 1924, he reached the banks of the sacred mother Ganges, at Rishikesh where the mother Ganga and the father Himalaya greeted him and welcomed him to be their companion.

Seeing the nature's charm which shone and sparkled like lightning, and the majestic Himalayas offering him a seat and asking him to settle down there to open the gateway of spiritual awakening in the land, this young Saint made up his mind to settle down there.

SANYASA

In the same year, he met a sadhu by name Swami Viswananda, who blessed this young man, finding Spiritual qualities in him. The Swami was struck with this young man's Vairagya, Bhakti and other ascetic qualities and offered to give him Sanyasa.

A formal ceremony was performed, and this young doctor full of Vairagya, entered into the Holy Order of Sanyasa and since that day he has been known as Swami Sivananda.

On the opposite banks, where now stand the Swargashram and the Gita Bhavan, this

young Tapaswi started his severe Sadhana—Sivananda Swami was already thirty six years of age by then—without fear or hunger, meditating in silence according to the ancient scriptures, to attain God-realization.

Enroute to Badrinath, he started a dispensary for the Pilgrims where he would treat and nurse the sick pilgrims and the neglected sick Sadhus. Siva's heart opened to one and all. He took pleasure in serving them this way. He took no food, nor did he sleep for days together.

Seeing this Sadhu by the side of the gushing Ganges, passers-by offered some "rotis" (bread) in his "Patra" (vessel). Siva would soak these dried rotis in the sacred waters of the divine Mother Ganges and eat them, to keep himself alive, to serve humanity.

Sivananda was filled with God's presence. He drank only the divine love. For days together, he would not wake up from his Samadhi, but whenever he woke up from his intense Sadhana, (trance) after two or sometimes three days, he would stand in the Ganges up to neck, and pray, and come out, attend to the sick, eat some dried rotis soaked in the Ganges water, and go back to his severe and intense meditation. His needs were none. His intense desire was to have Lord's darshan. He wanted to see God face to face. Thus, he spent six long years in continuous meditation, in a small hut at Swarga shram on the banks of the river Ganges.

Siva's hunger and thirst for God's darshan had increased, and he could no longer wait. Sivananda was in God's raptures and spiritual ecstasy. For days and nights at a stretch, he remained in this state. Words are inadequate to narrate ! Oh ! Children, on this holy land, in the valley of Rishikesh, in the presence of the sparkling Ganga and grandeur of the Himalayas, and the twinkling moonlight night, all witnessing, our beloved Swami Sivananda beheld, the unbelievable, ah ! the most magnificent form of Lord Siva Himself. ! Ah ! Om, Om, Om..... Omkara Nada was resounding from all the corners.

With tears of joy filled in his lucky eyes, gazing at His figure with eager hungry look, Sivananda fell flat at the lotus feet of His beloved Lord. He became thrilled with vigorous pulsations of a new life and intense joy. Kneeling to Him in silence with emotion of bhakti he prayed for His mercy.

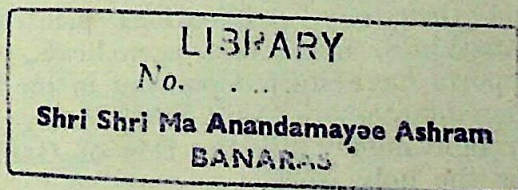
Seeing this bhakta's immeasurable devotion, love and purity, highest expression of divinity, Bhagawan Shankar spoke in human voice "Get up, my beloved Child, you have a gigantic task and a stupendous work before you. You are to be the large Banyan tree to give shelter to millions of human souls, impart knowledge of truth, jnana and bhakti. This world is sorely in need of a seer like you. The religion must be evolved out of simple philosophical thoughts. At this critical moment, you have to act like a beacon-light, in order to illumine the path to

the highest bliss. You will have to act as a true, brilliant representative from heaven. You will get success in your undertakings, my child, you are bound to achieve grand success". Thus charging Sivananda with the spiritual power, the Lord of Kailas disappeared !!!

So, you See, nectar's Children, our Swamiji is not just an ordinary man. Who is there in this Kaliyuga who could meditate till he got Lord's darshan ?!

The enlightened Sage with fullest sparks of wisdom and peace once more entered the life of activity, to unlock the domain of Moksha.

Swami Maharaj doesn't believe in keeping matted locks and a long beard, nor does he advocate shaving off their heads for spiritual attainment. He says : "Be as you are, but, shave the mind with the safety razor of Vichara. Shaving the heads is nothing, of course it helps to keep you cool and free. Shaving the egoism and Vasanas from the mind, with the Gillet blade of meditation is what is necessary".



CHAPTER THREE

A Peep into Sivananda Ashram

CLOSE to Rishikesh, at a place known as Muniki Reti, amid the nature's enchanting beauty, Sivananda chose the spot for his Ashram. With a few admirers and a handful of devotees, he started his mission to disseminate spiritual knowledge.

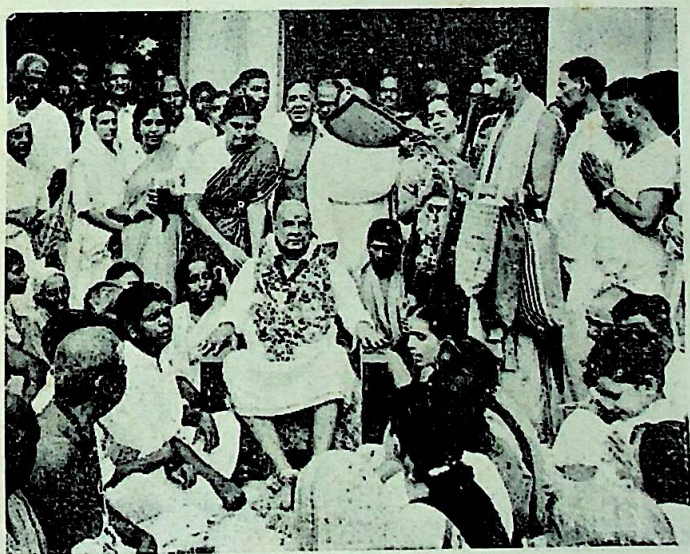
Devotees increased and his message reached all corners. Money was coming to him without asking for it, to spread this divine work. The Maharaja of Tehri gave him the whole hill (where now the Ashram stands), to be used for building little cottages for the increasing number of Sadhakas, and for building a charitable hospital. Many bhaktas go there to get spiritual advice. Ananda Kutir where Swami Maharaj lives is like the "Bhooloka Vaikuntha".

In the year 1936, the Divine Life Society was established. His mission being spiritual regeneration, Siva published many books in endless series to be scattered all over the world. A Printing Press had also been established to get their own publications printed. Several magazines, monthlies, periodicals, day-to-day reports have started pouring in for the speedy dissemination, without much delay. Devotees brought money, like the flow of Ganges water, for the holy work.



Top: Vani seen with a 'chamar'

Below: Devotees assembled after the Padapuja





Swamiji with a few lady devotees

Lord Viswanath temple has been built on the top of the Hill. Several Cottages grew up. Swamiji's near and dear devotees, recently built a temple, next to the Viswanath Mandir, where Guru Dev's marble, full size statue had been installed. There is also an "Annakshetra" where food is served to several sadhus daily without any discrimination whatsoever.

For the visitors who go there for a few days stay, there is a separate kitchen and rooms with electricity, free of charge. Donations, however small, are accepted with gratitude for this magnanimous work.

Siva, with his modern spirit, understands the human welfare. He brought spiritual awakening among the rich and poor. His mission has spread overseas also. Many foreigners go there to learn the art of Self-realization. The educated public understood him better. But some of the backward illiterate persons, not knowing or unable to understand him, as they do not find him like a Sanyasi of the olden times with a long beard, staying in a cave observing mowna, refuse to follow him due to their ignorance.

Siva makes every aspirant's heart pure with his matchless splendour. Under Siva's guidance, the age-old religious culture, which was almost on the perilous verge of extinction came to light, and the sinking faith was once more brought out carefully through unbroken communion with God.

Though Swami Sivananda breathes the air about him in the same way as any other human being does, his deeds and words carry us away from the depths of ignorance into the radiance of his mind, making his whole personality resplendent with divine glow of beatitude.

In the beginning this holy place had just one cottage; today it has changed into a Yoga Vedanta Forest University and a fine big Ashram; this University which has recently gathered some more dimensions imparts to eager students moral teachings, Upanishadic lessons and Vedantic philosophy. Aspirants who receive training there get eternal Atmic bliss.

Swamiji conducts Kirtans and Prayers with his rich and Powerful Divine Voice. Many people visit and stay at this Ashram, the centre of learning and Sadhana, and receive training Yoga Asans, Pranayam, and Surya Namaskarams.

Innumerable disciples write personal letters to this great saint; and, without any reserve, they open their hearts to him, have their doubts cleared and seek his valuable advice, regarding their troubles.

Siva, the kind-hearted, sends replies to each individual, giving them wonderful illuminating guidance for quick progress in Sadhana, to tear away their ignorance.

Some come to see the Ashram and reside for weeks and months there. In the fresh perfumed breeze under Siva's grace, where currents of divine love illumine the hearts of Bhaktas, Siva, radiating the whole atmosphere with his sincerity like a flower full of fragrance, elevating the minds of those around him, reigns !!

Siva founded a primary school for the children of the neighbouring villages. Besides the Annakshetra where food is provided, there is also a dispensary where medicines are supplied free of cost for all sorts of physical ailments.

There is a big library where very precious books are available for those readers who are hungry for knowledge.

Children, there is also a photo-studio in the Ashram. Swamiji appears to be very fond of posing for a photo. Oh, you are surprised why and how a Sannyasi can be fond of having a photo taken! Let me explain to you, my dear friends; Swamiji is above all these things. He thinks this is one way of propagating his divine message to the world. Any devotee or a visitor will consider it a very rare privilege to have a photo taken with a saint like him. Swamiji can study everyone's mind. He tries his best to please everyone and with special acquiescence in our keen desire, poses for a photo, even though it may be a trouble to him. So, it is not for his sake.— He can foresee the years to come—the future, when the houses that are adorned with

his photos will constantly reverbrate with the spiritual symbol. And thus make the photo an ever-lasting guide.

There is also a cinema movie projector there, where Yoga Asan and other film reels are shown to the visitors. This is meant for the quick progress of each aspirant in his daily Sadhana, to help attain development of mind and body and to open the realms of God in a more systematic and scientific way. Swamiji says, "time is fleeting, we cannot wait and waste even a single minute in learning alone. When you decide to do a thing, do it at once. Never postpone." He doesn't condemn cinema and photo-taking, when done with or for a good cause. These he says will help in spiritual routine and echo in every heart.

Thus Swamiji is able to spread his message to all with his divine knowledge and understanding heart.

To quote Swamiji's words : "Arise, awake, plunge into selfless service, Ahimsa, Satyam, Brahmacharya, Truthfulness, constant thinking of Lord"—in these simple words he uplifts the souls, in this modern age. Service is worship of God. See yourself in all, and in all see God, is his motto. Swamiji's object is to bring all religions together. He has composed several songs in English-Hindi and Tamil, to convey to everyone that there is one God only in the whole universe, called by different names. With this object our Swamiji Maharaj founded for the first time in the year 1947-the All-World

Religions' Federation—to proclaim oneness of essentials in all religions. From then onwards the parliament of religions has become an annual feature, under the able Presidentship of H.H. Sri Swami Sivananda.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Tour

It was in the year 1950, when Swamiji Maharaj left on a sacred pilgrimage-the All-India and Ceylon Tour !

Swamiji and party left in a tourist car to disseminate spiritual knowledge. His countless devotees had sent contributions liberally to make this tour a grand success. Siva, the light of the Divine Life, was pouring out his knowledge through his inspiring lectures, and sweet conversation. The hearts of everyone who listened to him were filled with awe, admiration and reverence, for the sage.

Ah, immortal Children, you only have to listen to his soul-stirring speeches; what an orator, what sport, what wit and humour in every sentence he speaks ! He makes everyone dumb and happy, and they all admitted they had learnt a lot and were benefitted. At each place he halted, the number of disciples also increased. People just left their homes and joined him like the children of Hamelin who followed, the Pied Piper, without any distinction whatsoever ! His inspiring lectures were like the sweet notes of Sri Krishna's "Murali" attracting all the Gopis and making them self forgetful. So, attracted by his magnetic, bewitching personality and the learned and

melodious lectures, people just left their Homes and went with him. Afterwards, the wives had to hunt for their husbands, children had to find their parents, the parents had to run in search of their sons who have left their homes; Such was the glory of this saint of modern age—who could enchant the whole audience at one glance !

When they all reached Rameswar and our Guru Maharaj, bathed the Siva Linga of Rameswar, with the sacred holy Ganges waters, a rare scene was witnessed and was watched by thousands.

From there Swamiji travelled upto Ceylon, where everyone rejoiced and acclaimed him as God Himself on earth, and worshipped him with devotion.

Swami Sivananda also recorded his soul-stirring and inspiring Kirtans at Several A.I.R. Stations during his tour. Swamiji lifts up his sincere and faithful devotees to the celestial heights, with his thrilling songs.

Thus, God's divine children, you will see that Swamiji is quite a modern man, in performing his own duties of life, intensely in love with humanity.

His acts are so noble, liberating the man from the worldly ties. His personality captivates; his prescription is—

“Contentment is the greatest wealth;
Life is short, Time of death is uncertain;
Never indulge in Maya and Moha;
Only prayers will help.”

This humble messenger likes to guide every Sadhak till he or she can attain God-realization.

MIRACULOUS ESCAPE

Oh, Children, Listen, I shall tell you some thing more, which will make you all stand on pin points and which will reveal to you, the unique characteristic compassion and calmness of Swami Sivananda even at a time when a man made an attempt to kill him ! May God protect Sivananda for ever and ever !!!

Listen children. The night "Satsang" was in progress, in the big bhajan hall on top of the hill at Sivananda Ashram, one night. Except on the alter where some "*Deepas*" lights shone brightly the rest of the hall was almost plunged in darkness. Our Sivananda Swami was sitting at the entrance of the hall with one or two other faithfull disciples of his. The Kirtan was in full swing. Every one in the bhajan hall was drowned in the Divine Name. Slowly but boldly a new resident sadhak (whom Swamiji allowed to remain in the Ashram out of compassion) came with an axe. He did not have much trouble to approach Siva, as there are no restrictions to go to him. The ocean of compassion does not mind the dangers that are awaiting. The axe was raised ! The Devas shuddered in Heaven ; "*Vayu*" (wind) became restless and was whistling past. Om chanting inside the Hall was in climax. Lo, the axe fell ; The culprit's hand trembled the axe missed its mark ! The door which got the blow

made a slight noise as a warning. The assailant became more nervous. He quickly raised the axe a second time. Kirtan made every-one fall into a trance! Tup! A noise was heard by every-one, Sivananda who has identified himself with Infinite All-Pervading Essence of Existence, did not receive the blow!! This time a picture of Swamiji's which was hung on the wall, received the hard blow and fell down into pieces. The picture offered its head in the place of our beloved Swami Maharaj's!!

The two blows missed their mark. Only the force of raising the axe, to give a strong blow, made the cloth turbun which Swamiji was wearing that night to prevent the chill, was blown off from his head, thus saving the sacred head un-hurt.

Sivananda woke up to the fact that some one was assaulting him. He thought it was a stick only with which he was trying to beat him. Swamiji asked the man who was still standing there shivering with perspiration all over his body "Have you finished with the job? Do you want to beat me more"? Meanwhile every-body realised what had happened; Swamiji's near disciples caught hold of the man tightly to prevent him from running away. The crowd collected. One or two people fell on the assailant and started beating and abusing him. Sivananda shouted at the top of his powerful voice which drowned the crowd's noise; "Oh, do not beat him, do not beat him; Leave him. How will it help now?" Every

one was struck with wonder at the way Siva coolly and calmly tells them not to beat the man who tried to kill him! Swamiji called the assailant to him and offered him some fruits and sent him away asking him to take rest. Every one had to disperse leaving the assailant alone.

The Kirtan continued—Arati and Shanti Path were duly conducted. Meanwhile two police men who heard about all this commotion a few minutes back, came running panting for breath—when.....

“Sarve Bhavantu Sukhina

Sarve Shantu Niramaya

Sarve Bhandrain Pasyantu

Maa Kas-chit Dukhabhag” Bhavet.

was going on.....

No one else can have the tranquility of mind to be able to repeat the Shanti mantra in the midst of chaos that would have prevailed in the bhajan hall. No one could have had the nerve to repeat any mantra. It needs a sage of Eternal peace to brush aside such a tragic event and to calmly conduct (as though nothing had happened) the usual Shanti Mantra.

Siva has the protection of the Lord. Next morning, you know children, what Siva did? He called that man to his “kutia” fed him with all sorts of sweet meats and made him repeat some mantras, applied some “Kum-Kum” & “Bhasma” on his fore-head and made a present of a new blanket and some money to him and

asked the police not to take any action about
this ignorant innocent man, and sent him away !!
Such is Siva's compassion ! children !

CHAPTER FIVE

Miracles

How many miracles had Siva performed ! And yet, friends, he does not know jugglery nor is he a magician ! He never boasts and tells anyone that he can do so many miracles. Perhaps he himself is not aware of his own Lilas ! I have myself had several experiences of his miracles and was surprised. When we go and tell Siva such and such a thing has happened, he only will nod his head and smile, like a child ! What is there he does not know or understand ? At the end I shall narrate to you some of the miracles happened to me and to others too due to Swamiji's "Mahima". Only when Swamiji feels, his services and help are required by his "Bhaktas" or when he wants to prove that he is everywhere and he can act anywhere, he shows his miracles. If some atheist or a non believer says he has no belief in Swamiji and he talks about Swamiji in a sort of mockery way, Swamiji will make him convinced through his various Leelas. But unless there is some necessity to turn the other man into his Bhakta, for some reason, or the other, or there is something else absolutely essential to show his powers, he would not do so. You can read some of his miracles which have happened and see for yourselves !

CHAPTER SIX

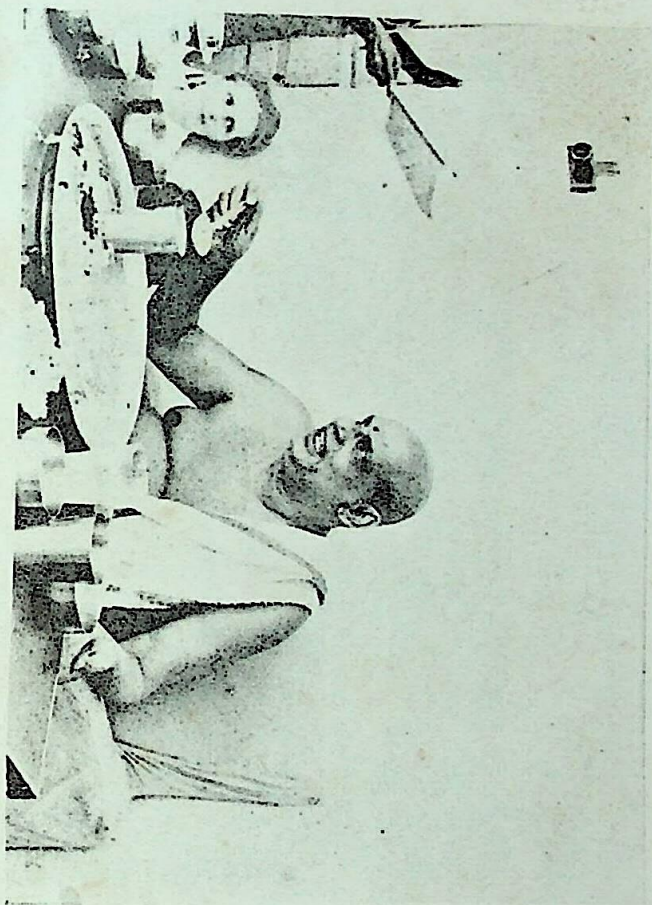
Music

Sivananda appreciates music immensely. He calls music, the language of Gods. Sangeeta Yoga he says is a Bhakti Yoga. Siva with his modern views, has "Sangeetha Sabhas" in his evening Satsangh. Music goes side by side with Ramayan Path, Geetha Path and other Puranic stories. The daily Satsangh which is a real treat and peace to the hearts of the visitors there, never ends without any music. Renowned artists from all parts of India go and sing before him and receive his blessings. Even some of the foreigners like to show their talents in the Western music and Swamiji enjoys that too with equal zeal. If any new visitor goes to him, the first question, our Swamiji will put is—"Do you sing or play on any instrument?" He makes the visitors elevated with this simple question. Then if the answer is "yes", he makes them sing in his evening Darbar (Satsang) and gives them suitable titles according to their ability and as they deserve. He exalts virtues, ignoring the other factors, and showers his grace and compassion, even on some of the undeserving recipients to give them good encouragement and make them rise through this wonderful Yoga.

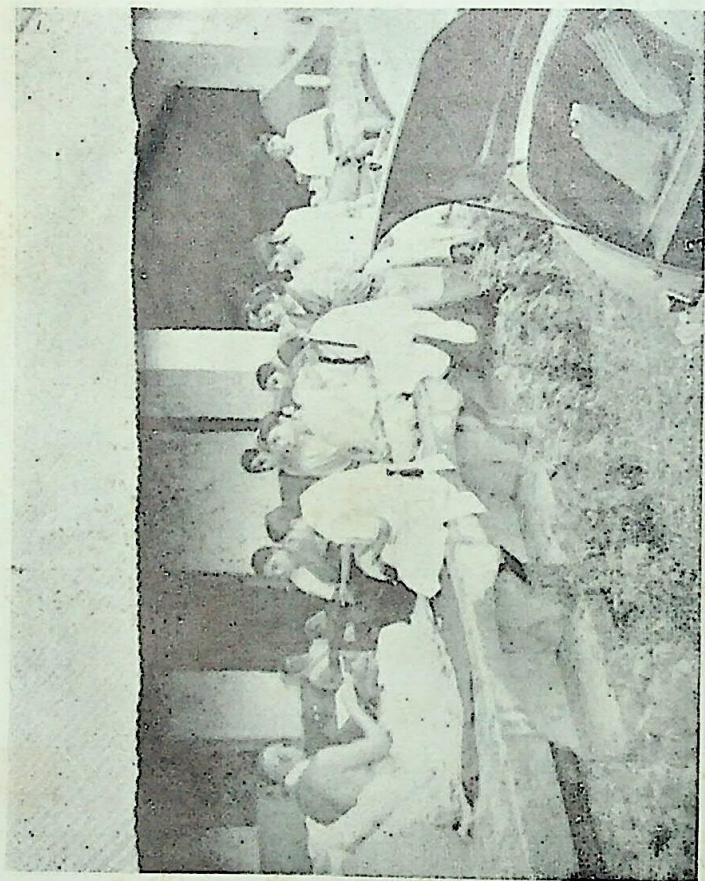
When Siva starts singing, the bees seem to accompany him on the violin, the wind plays the

drum, the birds sing in chorus and the nature's own wonderful orchestra chants OM giving him the nād like a tānpura. Oh, it is such a soul-stirring and thrilling experience—making the whole audience so forgetful and enchanted. Come along divine children, I shall take you there, let us all enjoy the sweet notes from this mighty saint.

Swamiji is equally familiar with the knowledge of astrology, astronomy, Palmistry, sports, debates and various other things. There is no subject that does not interest him. He is an-all-rounder.



Swamiiji enjoying a meal with humour



Swamiiji taking Geeta classes

CHAPTER SEVEN

Literature

Sivananda's publications are countless in number. His writings and teachings inspire the readers and elevate them. Sivananda-literature conveys to you in a very simple language, all the truths and morals of our ancient culture with its essence, making the readers grow old in wisdom. What may take some ten years in the normal course for anyone to understand—the Vedas, Upanishads, and Geeta—is given by him briefly in a nut-shell to be easily digested.

Swamiji's literature is unrivalled—as the best medium of communication to God. His writings lift up the down-trodden, relieve them of their sorrows and transform them completely. Some of Swamiji Maharaj's books are : Mind, Its Mysteries and Control, Sure Ways of Success in Life, his commentary on Bhagavad Gita—Ten Upanishads and several other works. He answers everyman's problems through his inspiring writings and consoles the people.

CHAPTER EIGHT

*Yoga Vedanta Forest
University*

This is a unique University, my dear Children. Do you think you will find a big building, many Professors, and thousands of students in this University? Siva with his own unique and dynamic personality is the Chancellor of this remarkable institution. Nature's own creations are the huge class rooms under which the knowledge of Bliss is disseminated. The resident Sadhaks, each one of them, who are all well-versed in their particular line are the Professors. Every seeker of the world and every aspirant, all visitors are the students of this University.

They all get practical training in Yoga Asanas, Surya Namaskaras, Pranayama, theory of Bhakti Yoga, Karma Yoga, Raja Yoga and Jnana Yoga. Classes are also held to teach Music, Sanskrit, Typewriting, selfless service, nursing, Hatha Yoga, etc. and also training as a worker in the printing press.

Several foreign students have also undergone training at this University and have been greatly benefited. There is also another remarkable and strange thing here. Many disappointed young boys who run away from their houses with frustration come and collect here. And our compassionate Swamiji instead

of turning them out from the Ashram, talks to them kindly, cheers them up and makes them able workmen as composers and other craftsmen, and sends them away after six months or so, to earn their livelihood outside. Thus they are improved-mentally, spiritually and in all other respects.

To encourage the students, Siva gives them titles and diplomas. Many advanced students of Siva, have also founded branches and schools in various parts of the world. East and West both have acclaimed this, and reverently admired Siva's method of teaching the fundamentals without much toil.

In this modern age, when science has come to the climax and we find atomic energy everywhere and the function of man has almost become mechanical and automatic following the aim of the times, the fate of man has brought, more sorrow, more suffering and demoralization in the civilised youth. All sorts of cinemas are in the increase. We are the architects of our own destiny. Here, I am quoting the words of the famous American poet, H.W. Longfellow :—

“We are the architects of fate,
Working in these halls of time,
Some with massive deeds and great
Some with ornaments of Rhyme”——

The modern man has neither the time nor the inner urge and leisure to learn philosophical works. Swamiji's pleasing literature and learned discourse give supreme light and

have come to us like a boon, elevating the souls straightaway.

Is it not a holy idea that nature is inter-related with man? It is His will that we should be in communion with nature. It is wrong to break off any link with nature, which is God, as the famous Poet Wordsworth says.

“If this belief from heaven be sent
If such be Natures’ holy plan
Have I not reason to lament
What man has made of Man.”

At this critical period, right type of education, spiritual and moral and religious study only can help the youth of to-day and to-morrow.

Through the elevation of the soul, by good deeds and good actions, we can mould the attitude and its angle of vision. Moral literature like our Swamiji’s has to play its part.

Divine Children, the number of such dejected, wearied and disappointed are growing. They all like to find a way out of that disgusting atmosphere and seek Peace and solace. To quench such persons’ longing thirst only, great Sages like our Swamiji are born. Only such great ones must come forward to make them conscious of their own divinity. Swamiji alone knows that the manifest universe is a part of pure consciousness. To him everything is God—and God is everything.

The public must be made to understand that there can be no real happiness without the religious sentiment. Through his numerous

books and magazines, periodicals and lectures Swamiji leads and guides them to Self-realization and true freedom.

Swamiji's teachings and practical hints can remove all obstacles and carry them up on the spiritual plane. Swamiji teaches us by his own example.

His wonderful ability, endless patience, and adaptability are praiseworthy points. Swamiji's remarkable memory and Shakti to perform one hundred things at a time, simultaneously, is worth mentioning here. He can give solution (answer) to one hundred different questions at one time. For instance one person will be throwing flowers on Swamiji, another may be performing a different thing, and yet another will be reciting a Sanskrit Sloka, still another will be ringing bells and so on—and Swamiji is able to observe everything and can say, how many flowers are thrown on him, what work the other man was performing, the Sloka, by still another man, can be explained with context, with full meaning, and how many bells were rung is his presence and so many other things performed at one time !!

Children of the Lord, you all seem to be so excited and eager to know more and more about this majestic saint. Yes, listen, I shall tell you more.

His influence over some of his own more intimate and favourite disciples has brought terrific changes in them, given them the spirit of universal brotherhood, oneness in religion

and in the development of moral character and bringing the people of the world closer and establishing world Peace and also lessening any sort of barriers.

Sivananda can easily be acclaimed as the Nation-builder, by his teachings of truth, self-discipline, spirit of renunciation, and his dynamic leadership, to serve the humanity at large. All these factors help the man in moulding his character.

Sri Ramakrishna Pramahansa declared, "Service of God is service of Humanity" from times immemorial, India had always been leading in spiritual training and spiritual knowledge.

Great sages like Valmiki, Narada, Vyasa, Viswamitra, King Janaka, Kasyapa and old Masters like Tyagaraja, Tulsidas, Meera, Vivekananda, Ramana Maharishi, Sai Baba and so many others have all hailed from our *Holy Mother India*.

It is very lucky for us to see a great saint in Swami Sivananda, in our times—in flesh and blood and to be able to go to him, take instructions and get our problems solved. In a simplified form, Swamiji Maharaj will try his best to give us the essence of all the holy scriptures and benefit us.

Swamiji is the author of nearly two hundred and fifty books. His versatile knowledge in all the subjects has made him pour out his literary talents on philosophy, medicine, music,

art and religion, science, Bhagavad Gita, and various other subjects, for the advancement of the masses through his books and periodicals.

He believes in his mission and wants to propagate it for the betterment of the world. Distance and caste or creed have no meaning for Swamiji. He has a universal relationship with each and every one.

He injects non-violence, self-restraint and purity on spiritual values among his members. He has a keen sense of humour and a powerful knack of winning over people and to make even the enemies our friends and turn the wicked into righteous through his spiritual oneness.

Maharajahs come for his *darshan* and fan him. *Maharanees* wash his feet. Ministers and other high officials serve him. Swamiji is always in communion with God. And yet do you think, he is conceited or proud of that?

No, my dear children, I know, on the contrary what he does, listen. Sometimes when rich people come and do "*Padapuja*" (worshipping of feet) and offer gold coins on his holy feet and garland him with a garland made of one hundred rupee-notes (big notes) and drink the sacred water with which they have washed his feet, he feels very much at heart for them, though as a guru he has to allow them. Then when the whole ceremony of *Padapuja* is over he goes inside takes his own shoe and beats his own cheeks—lest he may unconsciously become conceited! Such is the glory of Sivananda! Om.

Some of our well-educated gentry also, though religiously inclined have started to doubt and consider it a fashion to suspect all the safron-robed Sadhus and the holy places. They instinctively become suspicious of a figure attired in those robes and start thinking he is a hypocrite or a scoundrel.

Personally I feel it is very wrong to think and imagine that all Sadhus are bogus. I agree there are really very few good, honest and real Sadhus now left in this age.

But it is wrong to suspect every Sadhu and take him to be a rogue. We must think and ponder well before we utter anything about Saints.

It is very difficult to find a cultured, intelligent, helpful and educated Sadhu like Swami Sivananda, who has come to reform the world, by his various schemes planning to make everyone perfect, trying his best to build and mould the character of everyone with his handsome contributions.

Swamiji is concerned with morality and ethics rather than mere religious conventions. That is his primary object and if people do not follow him and try to understand him and obey him, they will be poorer for it. He has acquired something and wants to give it to the world. It is upto them to accept or leave it. Let us not forget that a Sanyasi takes two vows, one to realise truth and the other to help the world.

Swami Sivananda has surpassed all the eminent Rishis of the past and the present by his unique method of teaching. There is no doubt that he has paved a path between earth and heaven.

Therefore, Children of the Lord my earnest request to you is, have faith in God and unlimited, devotion towards your Spiritual Guru. Be attached to Him alone. I am sure you will have no difficulties. I am speaking from my own experiences. Surrender everything unto him. May the blessings of Lord Rama and our Guru, shower upon us all ! May you all spread the glory of Ram-Nam !

SECTION -- II

PHILOSOPHY AND TEACHINGS OF MY MASTER

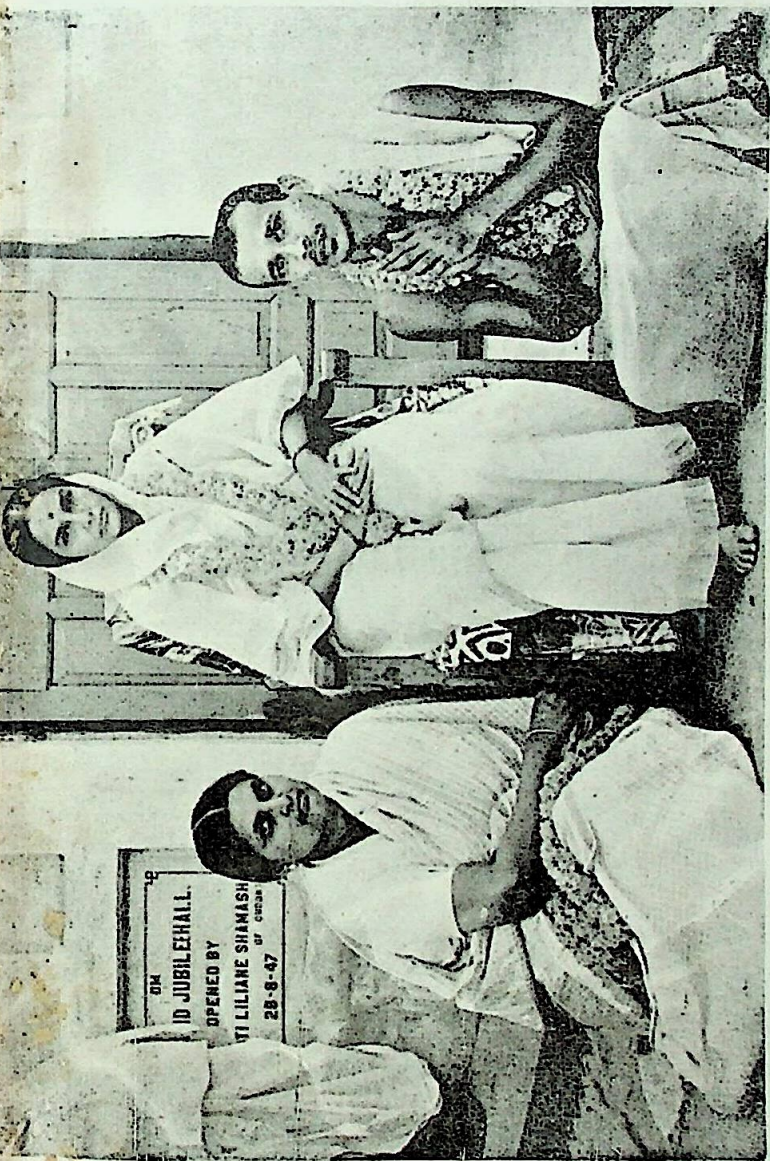
1. Sivananda on the Formation of Character.

Children of Divinity, my Master is never never harsh nor strict when he teaches. By winning them with his kind and compassionate words, giving them titles, even for ordinary achievements, to encourage them is his unique method. His heart's compassion is by itself the characteristic of Siva's philosophy.

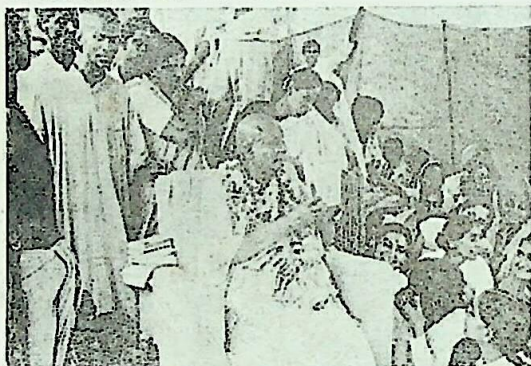
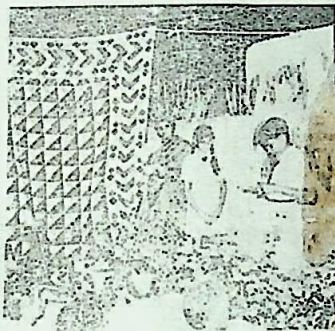
A practical Vedantin, he sees the Self alone everywhere. His rich philosophy is born out of his limitless universal love. Sivananda's philosophy is purely based on optimism. His teachings are short and to the point.

Swamiji Maharaj in his famous book *Sure Ways for Success in Life and God-Realization*, in Chapter IV gives some lessons on the importance of cultivating of virtues which I am quoting here :—

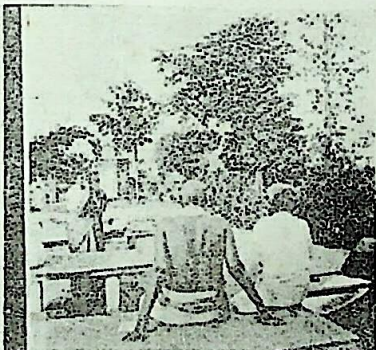
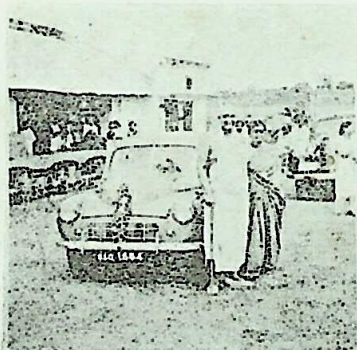
“A man may die but his character remains. It is the character that gives force and Power to man. Without character the attainment of knowledge is impossible. A man without any character is ignored and despised, by the community. If you want success in life, if you want to influence others, if you want to progress well in the spiritual path and if you wish to have God-realization, you must possess an unblemi-



Shri Godavari Mataji, holy Saint of Maharashtra with Chiddananda Swami and Sivananda Vani



*Swamiji
giving a dis-
course*



Top: Vani singing Bhajan.....

Directing a play.....

*Below: Swamiji and Vani ready to start
for the Saptarishi Ashram — At the Ashram*

shed spotless character. Shankara, Buddha, Jesus and other Sages of yore are remembered even now because they had wonderful character. They influenced people and converted others through their force of character.

Money is nothing before character. Character is a mighty soul-force. A man may be a skilful artist. He may be a clever musician. He may be an able poet or a great scientist. But if he has no character, he has no real position in society.

Character is a broad term. In a restricted sense it means moral character. A man may be strictly moral. But if he speaks deliberate untruth, if he is selfish and greedy, if he hurts the feelings of others, he is called a man of bad character. A man who wants to develop his character must possess all the qualities in accordance with the 13th and 16th chapters of the Bhagavatgeeta.

The sub-conscious mind is your willing servant and you must know how to extract work from that. It will establish new character, new ideals, new mental aspirations and new desires to possess this virtue, viz., courage. The supply can come only when there is demand. First try to create a desire. You should possess will. Will follows desire, just as dog follows the master. Feel that you actually possess this virtue. Repeat the words mentally and with all firmness at your command "OM Courage", feel mentally you have got it. You must imagine you have got this virtue and try to

express it in daily conduct. This virtue will develop slowly. Wait coolly; do not be discouraged. The force of old wrong tendency of timidity and fear is there. There is an internal fight between the old and new Samskaras. Eventually the new Samskaras will carry the day. Always positive overcomes the negative. Have unshakable faith and confidence that you will possess courage soon. Building up of Character is building of habits. New healthy, strong, virtuous habits will replace old morbid abnormal vicious habits.

If you find it difficult to build up your character, remain in the company of Sages and Saints. Their strong spiritual currents will change your character. This will give you success in life. Character is the garb of saintliness."

2. Adaptability

Swamiji's book continues to say :—"Adaptability is a virtue, a noble quality by which one adapts or fits himself with others, whatever their nature may be. The vast majority of persons do not know how to adjust themselves with others. Adaptability is a peculiar knack or pluck to win the hearts of others and ultimately the battle of life by a little bit of bending. Speak gently and sweetly. Carry out the orders to the very letter. Never retort your superior. Obedience is greater than reverence. The superior wants a little respect from his subordinates. Say "very well sir"; it costs you nothing.

Humility and obedience are necessary for developing adaptability. The egoistic proud man finds it very difficult to adapt himself. He is always in trouble. Egoism and pride are two obstacles in the way of Progress. A man of adaptability can develop balanced Mind. He can live in any environment. He is always happy and successful."

3. Truthfulness

"Truth alone triumphs but not falsehood. A truthful man is absolutely free from worries and anxieties. He has a clam mind. He is respected by society. Srutis emphatically declare "Satyam Vada". If you strictly observe speaking truth for twelve years, you will get "Vach Siddhi". Then whatever you speak will come to pass. Then you can influence thousands. The little gain that you get by telling lies is no gain at all. You pollute your conscience and infect your sub-conscious mind. The habit of telling lies is carried to your next birth, and you will have to undergo lots of sufferings from birth to birth.

Write in bold letters "Speak Truth" on thick card boards and hang them in prominent places in your houses and offices, and this can check you from speaking a lie.

Punish yourself by fasting if you tell a lie and record the lies in your diary. Gradually the number of lies will decrease and you will become a truthful man."

4. Self Reliance

Swami says on self-reliance as follows:—
 “Self-reliance gives immense internal strength. This is an important qualification for material and spiritual success. Luxurious habits have rendered people very weak. In olden days our forefathers had wonderful physique and vitality. They had longevity of life. Now-a-days man depends on others for everything. He has lost this virtue of self-reliance. He has no inner life. A doctor and a lawyer want servants to put on their shoes. They cannot walk even a furlong.

You must give up the false idea of prestige and position. The modern man now wants a pill from the hands of a Sannyasi for his spiritual uplift. They do not want to undergo any sort of Sadhana. Everyone of you should place yourself each step in the spiritual ladder. You are your own saviour. No one can save another. You will have to depend on yourself alone. Stand up on your own legs and get success in the world and in the spiritual Path. Tap the source and draw Power by closing the eyes.”

5. Patience and Perseverance

These two, go hand in hand. These are noble qualities that are born of “Satwa”. No success either in the material world or in the spiritual path is possible without these qualities. These qualities develop the will-power. The success of Mahatma Gandhi was due to

these qualities. He never got discouraged by failures. All great persons of the world have achieved greatness, success, and eminence through patience and perseverance.

A patient man always keeps his head cool and has a balanced mind. Many people get discouraged when they encounter some difficulties and give up the work as hopeless.

The ants collect small particles of sugar and rice and store them up in their abode. How patient and persevering they are! In the Bible you will find the words: "Be wise. Observe the ways of the ant." The bees collect a drop of honey from each flower so patiently and store the honey in the honey comb. How patient and persevering they are! A patient man cannot be irritated even a bit. Do all your routine in the day patiently. Be eager to develop them. Have a mental image of "OM PATIENCE" in your mind, and I assure you that you will become an embodiment of patience ultimately."

6. Sincerity and Honesty

"A sincere man and one who is honest gets success always in his work. He is very much liked by his superiors. Honesty is the best policy in the West but it is a sacred virtue in the East. A sincere man is soft-hearted, generous, unassuming, frank, honest and true. He will not find it difficult to find a job anywhere. People are quite eager to take a sincere man in their service.

Throughout the Gita the one ringing note is that the aspirant in the path of Self-realization should possess this important virtue. Look at the unflinching devotion of Lakshmana to Sri Rama. Savitri was very sincere to her husband. She saved her husband's life from the jaws of death. Maitreyi was very sincere too. So she received the Atma Vidya from her husband. Meera was very sincere towards her beloved Krishna. She had the good fortune to have darshan of Gopal. A sincere man is a God on earth. There is no virtue greater than sincerity. It should be developed at all costs by one and all."

7. Contentment

It is a vital subject. Swamiji says :—
 "The mind is always restless on account of greed. Greed is a kind of internal fire, that consumes a man slowly. Contentment is a powerful antidote for the poison of greed. There are four sentinels who guard the Domain of Moksha. They are Shanti, Satsang, Santosh and Vichara. If you can approach any one of these sentinels you can get hold of the other three. The man who is endowed with this important virtue is the richest man in all the three worlds. Even the richest man who is equal to Kubera who possesses Chintamani, Kamadenu and Kalpataru desires to have a domain over-seas. The man who is living upto 150 years, tries to prolong his longevity by taking rasayanas. The mind grasps one

thing and leaves it the next moment and tries to grasp another. Man moves restlessly in this world and says: "This is mine. I will try to possess that also." O restless mind, do not drag me in these impure desires and evil objects. Give me a desireless pure mind. Let my mind be ever fixed on the truth. Gita also says: be content with whatever you get by chance and apply yourself to meditation with a dispassionate mind. Socrates speaks very highly of this virtue.

Although people knew this is a virtue that can give peace of mind, yet they do not try to develop this virtue. Because they have lost the power of discrimination and power of Atmic enquiry on account of passion and greed.

The man who is contented is full of Sattwa. He is more energetic, calm and with one-pointed mind. Try to develop mental contentment."

8. Regularity and Punctuality

No man can reasonably expect success in life and God-realization if he does not possess these qualifications. Perfect discipline can be maintained only by regularity and punctuality. Man evolves quickly by regular habits. That man who is irregular and does his actions by fits and starts, cannot reap the fruits of his efforts. Learn your lesson from the nature. Mark how the season rotates regularly! How the minutes, days, nights, weeks, and months and years roll on! Nature is your teacher

and guide. Open your eyes, assimilate the instructions and follow.

Regularity, punctuality and discipline go hand in hand. They are inseparable. See how an Englishman adjusts his time to the very second. There may be a few geniuses in India like Mahatma Gandhi, C. V. Raman, Aurobindo, Rabindranath Thakore and a few Sages. Indians as a rule are notorious for their "Indian punctuality". Wake up Indians, wake up! That man who is regular and punctual will get sure success in all walks of life. There is no doubt. Be regular in going to bed and in rising up early in the morning. "Early to bed, early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise". Regularity should be your watch-word."

9. Pushing Nature

Pushing nature is also called gushing nature. This is the opposite of shyness. He wants to penetrate into all places like ether. Some doctors, lawyers and business men are starving because they have not got the pushing nature. They are intelligent and clever, but unfortunately they are so shy. They cannot influence other people. A man of pushing nature is always very active. He knows how to serve people and get into their confidence. He wants to rise up on the ladder of fortune and in the estimate of the world. He is also very jovial and cannot sit idle for a minute. He knows.

Europeans have this pushing nature in a large measure. Englishmen came in the beginning to India as mere traders and started the East India Company. Then slowly became the rulers of this soil, only through their pushing nature. Vasco de Gama had this pushing nature and discovered a sea-route to India. So did Columbus who discovered America. Pushing nature always keeps a man active and is useful for the religious aspirant too. This is an important qualification for all in all professions.

10. Pluck and Knack

This is also another important and most essential quality. When a man flourishes in business, people say : "Mr. so and so, has got a good business-knack. He has got the good pluck. Politeness, courtesy, good behaviour, are all hidden in this quality called Pluck. A man of business-knack is very careful in his accounts. He has good memory. He has presence of mind. A rough and rude man cannot prosper in business. He must not be afraid of failure or loss. A businessman with presence of mind, will not be disappointed with a failure, he will make it up very quickly by starting some other side-line. A man with knack and pluck can work wonders in the world. Even religious preachers are in need of this quality. Then alone they can influence people and spread their teaching far and wide. Religious teachers have to adopt various methods of work according to times, conditions and the needs."

So, you see now Children of Divinity, how Swamiji moves with the conditions and the needs of the man? Swamiji further teaches us culture of will and memory in the following lines in the same book, "Sure ways for success in life and god-Realization" :—

11. Will-Power

"Attention, power of endurance, overcoming aversion, dislikes and irritations, fortitude in suffering, command of temper, forbearance, mental power of endurance, firmness in meeting danger, power of resistance, and keeping up daily diary, etc. all these pave a long way in developing the will. One should patiently hear the words of others even though they are not interesting and charming. He should not fret and fume. Patient hearing develops will and wins the hearts of others. One should do actions and tasks that are uninteresting for themselves at times. This also develops the will-power. Never complain against bad environments. Create your own mental world wherever you remain and wherever you go. If your mind deludes you at every moment and at every step, try to overcome the obstacles by suitable means. Do not try to run away from bad, unfavourable environments. God has placed you there to make you grow quickly. If you get all sorts of comforts in a place, you will not grow strong. Your mind will be puzzled in a new place, when you will find you cannot get these comforts. You "Ragadwasha" even in the eternal snowy regions

of the Himalayas near Gangotri. You cannot get an ideal place and ideal surroundings in any part of the world. Banaras is a centre of Sanskrit learning, but it is famous for hot winds, in summer. Uttarkashi in the Himalayas is beautiful but you cannot get vegetables, and the cold in winter is very biting. This world is a relative plane of good and evil. Remember this point at all times. Try to live happily in any place, under any condition. You will become a strong dynamic personality. This is a great secret. You can conquer any difficulty.

The practice of concentration is of great help to strengthen the will. You must have an intelligent understanding of the habits of the mind—how it wanders and how it operates. The practice of thought culture, the practice of concentration, the practice of memory-culture, are all allied subjects. There is no hard and fast rule. The moment you go to bed simply relax the mind and give the suggestion, "I will have good sleep now". Do not think of anything else. Napoleon had this habit. Even when the bugle was blowing and the drums were beating on the battle-field, he would be snoring. His sub-conscious mind would wake him up at the very second he wanted to get up. With a cool mind, Napoleon would appear like a lion on the battle-field. Even Mahatma Gandhi had this practice. This kind of practice is a blessing to busy people. Their nerves are under great tension and pressure. By relaxing them every now and then, they could refresh themselves and keep quite fit for further activities.

Dr. Annie Besant used to write editorial columns when moving in the cars and trains. There are some doctors who read newspapers even when they are in the water-closets. They keep their minds fully occupied. This is the best of all practices for keeping up physical and mental Brahmacharya. Those who want to become magnetic and dynamic personalities or prodigies should utilize every second to the best possible advantage and should try to grow mentally, morally and spiritually, every second. Every one of us should realise the value of time. This can make a man a wonderful world figure.

12. Memory

Memory-culture is another important point. It brings success in all his endeavours. A man with strong and retentive memory gets sanguine success in all his undertakings. In Sanskrit term, memory is "smriti". "Smarana" is remembering. This is the function of the sub-conscious mind, "Chitta". It is like the sensitive plate of a gramophone. All the impressions are indelibly recorded there. Whenever you make an attempt to remember the past events or things, they come back to the surface of the conscious mind through the trap door, just as the man (actor) enters the stage from the side curtains. Sometimes you say, "I have no memory." Here it means you cannot bring out to the surface of the conscious mind in its original form the incident that occurred some time back.

The following are the four good characteristics of good memory. If you read once a passage and if you can reproduce the same nicely, it is a sign to indicate that you have a good memory. (1) This is termed "Sugamata". (2) If you can reproduce the same thing without increase or decrease it is called "Araihalya". (3) If you can preserve a fact or a passage or anything for a very considerable period, it is called retentive memory, Dharana. (4) If you can reproduce a passage at once without any difficulty when it is needed, it is called Upaharana.

If your brother is a coward, the sight of a similar man in another place will bring to your mind, the memory of your brother. This is memory due to similarity of objects—"Sadri-shyata".

A man of strong and retentive memory can turn out tremendous work in the twinkling of an eye. He can master any subject or art in a short time.

In olden days Sanskrit scholars got by heart all the Vedas. The gurukula system of Education has its own advantages. It develops memory to a very marvellous extent. There are some Pundits still, who can recite by memory the whole of Upanishads, Gita, Brahma Sutras, Kkandana Khadyam, Chit-sukhi, and Advaita Siddhi, the greatest monumental works on Vedanta. Gurukul system of education is wonderful. The students of modern Universities cannot compete with the Gurukul system.

13. Some Exercises for Memory Culture

Here are some easy exercises for memory culture as told by Sivananda.

Sit on Virasana or Padmasana. Close your eyes ; imagine there is a big garden. In one corner there are Jasmine flowers in another roses, in another Champak and so on. First think of the Jasmine, then rotate the mind to roses, then to Champak, and then to Lily. Again bring back the mind to Jasmine. Revolve the mind like this for two or three minutes. This is one kind of improving memory.

(2) Study one important Sloka from the Gita. Find out parallel lines in the Ramayana, the Bhagavata, the Upanishad, the Bible and connect all these passages and keep them in your mental disposition or pigeon-holes of the brain.

(3) There is still another exercise. Just imagine that there is a canvas sheet in front of you, which contains the pictures of nine animals. In the first top-row there are, a lion, a leopard and a cow, in the 2nd row, a horse, zebra, and a bear, and in the third row an elephant, buffalo and tiger. Practice to first row, then in the 2nd, and lastly in the third. Now, lion, horse, elephant, leopard, zebra, buffalo, cow, bear and tiger. You can change the order in many other ways like algebraical formulae or permutation and combination. Exercise on the memory of different kinds of gross and subtle sounds, tastes of articles of food, touch of various articles, on various shades of colour, etc., can also be practiced with advantage.

(4) Practise self-analysis or self-examination for about ten minutes, before you retire to bed. Sit comfortably on a chair and close your eyes. Think of all actions, good and bad, that you have done during the course of the day. On the first day, you may not be able to find out even two or three mistakes in your actions, because you are not in the habit of doing so. But by daily practice you will be able to visualise clearly the actions and mistakes of the day. The mind becomes subtle and sharp by the practice of introspection. This practice will develop your memory, and reduce the number of mistakes; you can note down all the actions in the night in your diary. A time will come when you will do only good actions without committing even a single mistake.

You must know the art of extracting work from the sub-conscious mind. In matters which demand too much thinking and long deliberation, you will have to wait for some days, before getting an answer from the sub-conscious mind. Again and again you will have to command the sub-conscious mind and watch for the results. Repeat the command once or twice. A strong and retentive memory, a powerful will and the practice of daily concentration and meditation will certainly make you versatile prodigy.

Along the following lines, Swamiji also teaches us in his book, *Sure Ways for Success in Life and God-Realization*.

B. ERADICATION OF NEGATIVE QUALITIES

14. Shyness

Shyness is a great hindrance in the path of success. This is a form of timidity or low fear. Shyness manifests when one is in the wrong path. A shy boy or a girl cannot express his or her thoughts boldly before any person. He cannot approach freely any stranger. Modesty is different from shyness. It is decency or chastity. Modesty comes out of politeness and polish of character. Shyness is a great weakness. It should be eradicated quickly by cultivating courage.

15. Timidity

Timidity is another weakness. This is also akin to shyness. He is unfit for public activities or any kind of adventurous work. He cannot turn out to be a successful man in life. He cannot talk boldly to his superiors. He is also afraid of losing life. He is much attached to his wife children and property. He is afraid of public opinion. Timidity must be eradicated by developing courage. It weakens a man. It hinders his success in life.

16. Pessimism

Pessimism is another undesirable negative quality. It is a depressing view of life. They look too much on the darker side of things. The

opposite of pessimism is optimism. It always looks on the bright side of the picture. A pessimist is ever gloomy. He infects others too. A pessimist cannot succeed in this world. Try to be cheerful under any condition of life. You will have to practice this.

17. Over-Credulousness

Some people are over credulous. They are easily cheated by others. You must fully understand the man. You must know his nature, qualities, his antecedents and his behaviour. When you are fully satisfied, then you can place your entire confidence in him. He may be a deep man. He may put on a false appearance, and turn out to be quite the opposite after some time. You will have to watch him very closely and hear all about him from other persons with whom he has moved. After close examination and test only, one should place his confidence and trust in another man.

18. Intolerance

Then comes another undesirable negative quality, intolerance. There are religious, communal, petty minded and so many other kinds of intolerances. For instance, a Brahmin can do any thing which is an infringement of the moral code. But he becomes intolerant when he sees a Kashmiri Brahmin eating meat. A South Indian Brahmin can take anything in a restaurant, but he gets intolerant when he sees

a Bangali eating fish. All restlessness and fighting, in this world of man takes its origin in intolerance. All these petty differences are pure mental creations. Destroy all barriers that separate man from man. Drink the eternal Atmic bliss. Become perfectly tolerant. Forget and forgive ; you will succeed in life.

19. Sense of Inferiority

Many a man worries himself too much that he is inferior to others. It is just a mental creation only. The inferior man can become the superior man if he exerts and struggles and develops a little bit. Never imagine you are inferior to others, on the other hand, if you think you are superior also is bad. Then you will begin to treat everyone with down-right contempt, the idea of inferiority and superiority is the product of ignorance. Develop equal vision. Hear what the Geeta says. Where is superiority or inferiority when you behold the one Self in everything? The sense of inferiority in others without an indirect appeal to self love is a painful feeling and not an exalting one. Change your angle of vision and mental attitude and rest in peace.

20. Jealousy and Pride

Jealousy is another canker that consumes man. It is nothing but petty-mindedness. The heart of a jealous man burns actually when he sees his neighbour in a more prosperous con-

dition. The same is the case with nations and communities. Jealousy can be eradicated by developing the opposite qualities like nobility, or magnanimity. Pride should be removed by developing humility. Develop frankness and simplicity. Anger should be overcome by developing love and spirit of service.

21. Control of Anger

Every one of us without any exception whatsoever, is a victim of this horrible malady. Anger is a "vritty" or modification that arises from the mind lake. It is a wave of unpleasant feeling that arises from the Antah-karana when he gets displeased with another. It is in other words, a modification of desire, just as milk is changed into curd, so also desire becomes changed into anger. It is the most formidable enemy of peace, knowledge and devotion. It is the straightest road to hell itself.

An angry man commits murder. He himself does not know what exactly he is doing. He becomes emotional and impulsive. A man when he is angry will talk anything. He will do anything he likes. A hot word results in fighting and even stabbing. He loses his consciousness for the time being. He falls a prey to anger. An easily irritable man is always unjust. He is swayed by impulses and emotions.

Anger gains strength by repetition. If it is checked then and there man gains immense strength of will. When anger is controlled it

becomes transmuted into spiritual energy that can move the three worlds.

Just as heat or light is changed into electricity, so also, anger becomes changed into Ojas. Energy takes another form. An angry man gets enormous strength for the time being and gets a collapse after sometime on account of reaction.

The root cause of anger is ignorance and egoism. Through development of opposite virtues, anger can be controlled to an enormous degree. Think of the advantages of possessing this virtue and the disadvantages of irritability. He who is able to resist the force of desire and anger even here, before he quits his body, he is a blessed man.

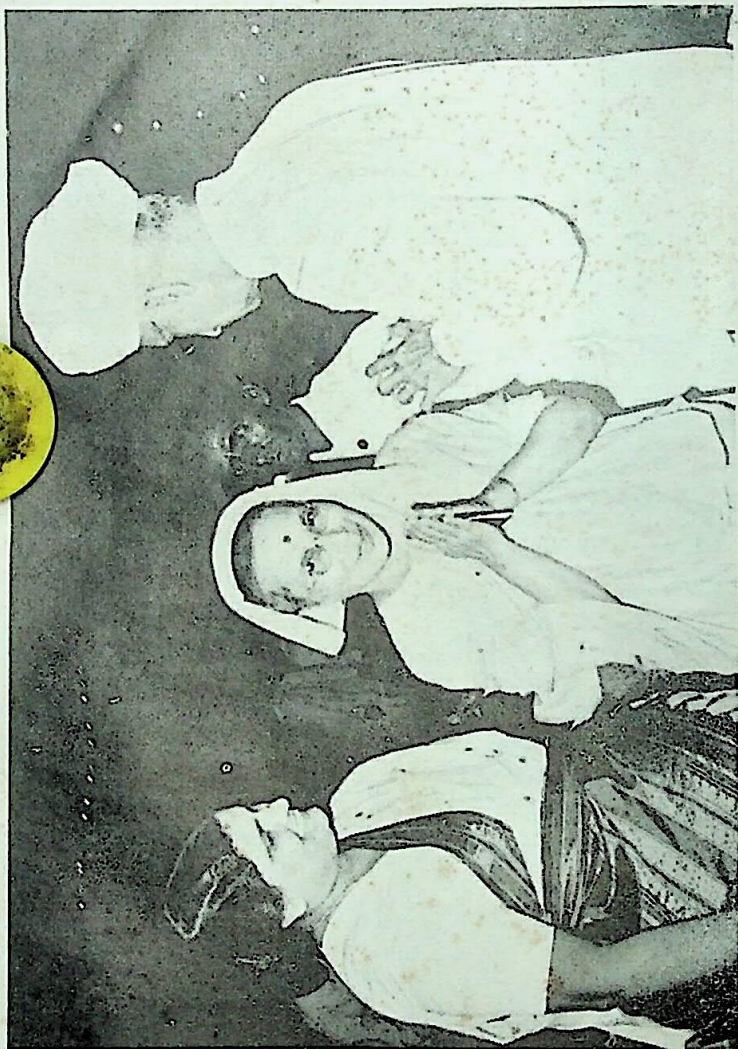
“Those who are free from desire and who have subdued their minds and realised themselves-around such austere men lies the beatitude of God.” (Gita)

Suffering turns the mind towards God. Therefore suffering is a blessing in disguise. It is very difficult to please everybody. Let the world say whatever they like. Let our minds be pure and let us work conscientiously. Let us be true to ourselves. Even gods are criticised!

Nip irritability in bud. Be cautious and vigilant whenever irritability manifests in the mind lake. Start vigorous mental Japa or prayer and repetition of ‘OM’ Shanti-Peace.



Mrs. Ram serving food to the followers of Godavari Mataji



Mrs. Ram introducing Swami Shantananda Mataji to Dr. S. Radhakrishnan

The minds of students of today must be trained towards the spiritual growth. It is a pity that the present system of education in India is not at all favourable for the philosophical teachings like Upanishads and Puranas. Do not neglect the studies of the Vedas and duty towards God.

Wake up from this mire of ignorance. It has become a fashion to dislike religious minded people. They look down on those who wear simple dresses. They forget that 'Plain living and high thinking, should be the Motto.

So my dear children did you see what Sivananda's philosophy tells ?

We must all try to remain cool even under the most difficult and provocative conditions.

In another great book of our Swamiji "Japa Yoga", Swamiji gives beautiful instructions. Here are a few lines of his "Philosophy of Japa", glory of Ram Nam.

C. NAMES OF THE LORD : AND DEVOTION

22. Glory of Ram Nam

The powers of repeating Lord's name are marvellous. How sweet is God's name ! How it transforms quickly the Asoric diabolical nature into Sattwic, divine nature ! How it brings you face to face with the Lord, and makes you realise your oneness with HIM (supreme love). The Lord's name chanted

correctly or incorrectly, is sure to give the desired result. The glory of the name of god cannot be established through reasoning and intellect. It can certainly be experienced or realised only through devotion, faith, and constant repetition of the name. Every name is filled with countless potencies or shakti. It exalts a man to the status of divinity. It destroys old sins, Vasanas, Sankalpas, whims, fancies, depressing moods, and various Samskaras !

It was by the glory of Ram-Nam that stones floated in water and the bridge over the sea. "The setu" was built, by Sugriva and his comrades. It was Ram-Nam which cooled Prahlada, when he was thrown into the fire.

It was repetition of Ram-Nam from the opposite way as "Mara Mara" by the Sage Valmiki, which brought him fame and name.

There are number of instances where Ram-Nam has given life to dead-bodies.

Blessed indeed are those who repeat God's name, for they will be free from the wheels of birth and death and will attain immortality.

The Pandavas were saved, though the Lakshagriha in which they lived was burnt because of their immense faith in the name of Hari.

Hanuman was not burnt, though his tail was set on fire by the Rakshasas on account of his immense faith in Rama's name. Sita was not harmed through fire though she had to

undergo the fire-trial for testing her chastity, because she had Rama's name as her sole refuge. The palace of Vibheeshana was not burnt in Lanka, when the whole Lanka was burnt to ashes, because of his immense faith in the name of Sri Rama. Such is the glory of the Lord's name.

Goswamy Tulsidas has left nothing unsaid about the glory of Divine name. There is not the least doubt that all sacred formulae such as the Dwadashakshara (consisting of twelve letters) and Ashtakshara (consting of eight letters) Mantras bring solace to those entangled in the meshes of worldly attachment.

God is said to possess a thousand names : It means his names are infinite ; His glory is infinite. In the present age even ignorant and unlettered people can take shelter under the mono-syllable Mantra. When pronounced, the word "Rama" makes a single sound and trully speaking there is no difference between the sacred syllable "Om" and the word "Rama".

The glory of the divine name cannot be established through reasoning and intellect. It can be experienced only through reverence and faith.

Take the name of Hari every morning and evening, Nay ! at all times. The force of ignorance working in your heart will be driven away as soon as you utter the name of Hari with the clapping of hands.

The name of God uttered conciously or unconsciously or even by mistake will surely

bring its own reward. A person who deliberately goes to bathe in a river is in no way better than his friend who is pushed into the river by some one else, so far as ablution as such is concerned; and a third man who remains lying on his cot and on whom a bucket of water is thrown, also, has his body washed.

Sri Rama Krishna Paramahansa says :

“Blessed are the pious souls who drink uninterruptedly the nectar of Sri Rama’s name which has been churned out of the ocean of the Vedas, which removes the impurities of the iron age which lives constantly on the Tongue of Lord Siva, which is a sovereign remedy or unfailing specific to cure the disease of wordly existence, and is life itself to mother Janaki.”

Rama delivered a single lady, Ahalya, whereas the name has purified crores of wicked men.

Rama gave salvation to two of his faithful servants—Shabari and Jatayu, but the name has been the saviour of countless wicked persons. Live on milk for six months in Chitrakuta, and repeat Rama Nam incessantly with one pointed mind and unshakable faith, you will get Darshan of Lord Rama, liberation, Siddhis and all auspicious blessings from the Lord.

The two sweet fascinating letters *Ra* and *Ma* are like the two eyes of the alphabet and the very life—breath of the devotees.

Victory to Rama-Nama which blesses us for ever! Glory to Rama-Nama which confers immortality, eternal peace, and infinite bliss on those who repeat it!

So says Sivananda, "My dear children of immortality, let us all repeat the glorious Ram-Ram and get the benefits of repeating the most miraculous and powerful name.

"Om Sri Ram, Jaya Ram Jaya Ram Jaya Ram.
Sat is Ram, Chit is Ram, Ananda is Ram.
Shati is Ram, Shakti is Ram, Jyoti is Ram,
Prema is Ram, Mercy is Ram,
Beauty is Ram, Bliss is Ram, Joy is Ram,
Purity is Ram, Sarvam Rama Mayam.
Glory to Ram, Victory to Ram,
Adoration to Ram, Salutations to Ram,
Prostrations to Ram.

Om Sri Ram, Jaya Ram, Sita Ram,
Jaya Jaya Ram, Ram Ram Ram.

Om Triyambakam Yajamahe Sugandhim
Pushti Vardhanam
Urvarukamiva Bandhanan-Mrityormukshiya
Mamritat

"We worship the three eyed one Lord Siva, who is fragrant and nourshes all beings. May he liberate me from the death for the sake of immortality, even as the cucumber is severed from its bondage (of the creeper)".

The Mantra presented here is life-giving one. It has got a curative effect against diseases and is safe insurance against accidents and other similar troubles.

This Mantra is also a Moksha Mantra. It bestows health, long life, peace and prosperity, and satisfaction to everyone who will repeat this with faith.

Let us pray : OM, OM, OM, OM.

Oh Children of the Lord, wake up from this Maya, ignorance. If you want to illuminate yourself, repeat the glorious Ram Nam.

The bell, the call, is reminding you again and again. Life is short. Time is fleeting. The body is decaying. At the last moment of your life, when death is chocking you, you will not be able to utter these two glorious Akshras. You must take for yourself the name of Sri Rama in abundance. Whether you remember him in your pleasant mood, or unpleasant mood, it is sure to give its good effect, just as the seeds in the fields thrown either purposely or wrongly, give good results.

It is not at all wise to while away the time in arguments or in vain discussions.

The well-known poet Goswami Tulsidas says : "The worshipping of the name of Sri Rama never goes in vain, just as the practice of swimming in one's boyhood is of great help at some future time."

Name of Rama is the supreme purifier and enlightner, dispeller of all darkness of ignorance. His name is filled with countless powers and potencies. It is more precious than the wealth of the whole world. Name fills the heart with divine Prema, joy and bliss.

Those who have a taste for music can sing the Rama Mantra and make their minds quickly elevated and exalted. Bhava Samadhi will ensue. See; notice for yourself, the most miraculous transformation that begins to take place in you. Tukaram, Jnana Dev Sakkubai, Dhruva, Prahlada, Ajamila, Ram Dass and several others had direct Darshan of the Lord, by repeating simply the glorious name constantly.

You need not do severe 'Tapas.' (Penance) You need not stand on one leg for several years, as people did in days of yore. You can realise God through Japa, 'Kirtan' and constant repetition of name and Prayer.

Children, listen to the stories of some of the great bhaktas, who with their unflinching devotion & faith have been protected at every stage by the name of the Lord.

24. Story of Ajamila

Ajamila was the son of a Brahmana. He was dutiful, virtuous, modest, truthful and regular in the performance of Vedic injunctions. One day, in obedience to his father he went into the forest and there collected fruits, flowers sacrificial wood and kusha: on returning, he saw a 'Sudra' in company with a slave girl. He tried much to subdue his patrimony to win the love of that girl. He gave up his wife and kept company with that slave girl. He had by her, several sons of whom, the youngest was named Narayana. Ajamila lost all his good qualities in low company and he forgot his daily practices.

To support the woman he kept, he had to do all vicious and unlawful acts. Narayana the youngest of his sons was his favourite. He loved him and cared for him much. At last Ajamila's end approached. Even then, he thought of his youngest son, who was playing outside.

The fierce-looking messengers of Yama appeared, with ropes in hand. Terrified at the sight, Ajamila cried out "Narayana Narayana," Instantly the messengers of Vishnu appeared. At the time when the servants of Yama were drawing out the Jiva from the heart of Ajamila, the attendants of Vishnu stopped them with a strong voice. "But who are you" said they, "To interfere with the just sway of Yama?" The bright attendants of Vaikuntha Dhama, only smiled and asked : "What is Dharma? Does your Lord Yama hold the sceptre of Punishments against all who perform Karma? Is there no distinction made ?

The astral messengers replied. "The performance of vedic injunctions is Dharma and their disregard is Adharma. This Ajamila in his earlier days duly respected the Vedas. But it was only after he came in contact with the slave girl, he lost his Brahmanism. He justly comes to Yama now for punishment as now he disrespected the Vedas."

The attendants of Vishnu expressed wonder at these words. "And you are servants of him, who is called the king of Dharma? Don't you know that there is something above the Vedas? This Ajamila consciously or unconsciously took the name of Narayana and that saved him from

your clutches. It is the nature of fire to consume fuel and so it is in the nature of Vishnu's name to destroy all sins. If one unconsciously takes some powerful medicine does it not have effect? It matters not whether Ajamila meant his youngest son or not; but he took the name of Narayana, so you must retire."

Wonderstruck the servants of Yama left their hold over Ajamila. They went away and complained to their Master. "There must be one law and one dispenser of that law. Otherwise, some will be punished and others not. Why should there be this difference. We know thee to be the sole dispenser of the law for the wicked vicious. But just now, the attendants of Vishnu came and wrested from our hands, a transgressor against Vedas."

"My faithfull servants," replied Yama. "Yes it is true, there is some one above me and that is Vishnu. His ways are mysterious. The whole universe is in Him. Only twelve of us know his Dharma which is Bhagawata and no one else knows. These twelve are. Brahma, Siva, Sanat Kumar, Narada, Kapila, Manu, Prahlada, Janaka Bhishma Bali, Suka and myself."

Ajamila heard the conversation between messengers of Yama and Vishnu. He became sorly penitent. He overcame his attachments, left the house and went to Hardwar. There he meditated on Vishnu with concentrated mind, the former attendants of Vishnu appeared before him once more, and took him on a decorated chariot to Vaikuntha-loka.

A DISCIPLE.

25. Faith can work miracles—A disciple

A great Guru, who lived in a temple on the bank of a river had many disciples all over the land. Once he called all the disciples saying, he wanted to see them all before death takes him away as he was expecting it soon. The most favourite disciples of the great Guru who always lived with him grew anxious and always kept themselves close to him. They thought he might disclose some secret, which made him so great. Though their Guru taught them many sacred mantras, they still thought their Guru still kept the sacred mantra which gave powers to him, to be revealed only in the end. Disciples from every part arrived and they all waited anxiously with great expectation.

Now, a humble disciple who lived far away on the opposite side of the river also came to the river which was in high floods and was too turbulent even to allow boats to pass. However, the humble disciple must not wait, as in the meanwhile the Guru may pass away. He should not tarry; but what was to be done ?. He knew that the mantra which his Guru taught was all powerful and capable of anything. Such was his faith. So chanting the Mantra with faith and devotion, he walked over the river. All the disciples who saw this, were surprised at his powers and recognising him as the one who came long ago to their Guru and stayed but one day only and went away after being taught

something by him, all the disciples thought that the Guru gave him away the secret. They sternly demanded of their Guru the reason why he deceived them thus, though they served him in a very humble manner for many years, and yielded the secret to a stranger who by the way came there for a day long ago.

The Guru with a smile waved them to be calm, and summoning the humble disciple to his presence, ordered him to tell the disciples, what he was taught by him long ago. The anxious group of disciples was taken aback with amazement when they heard him utter the name of "Kudu Kudu" with awe, veneration and devotion.

Look said the Guru, "In it he believed and thought that he got the clue to all. And even so is he rewarded for his faith, and devotion. But you always doubted that it was not all and that something remained unrevealed still, though I told you 'Mantras' of great powers. This distracted your concentration, and the idea of a great secret was in your mind. You are constantly thinking about the imperfection of the 'Manthra.' This unintentional and unnoticed concentration upon the imperfection made you even imperfect."

26. Stories of Guru Bhakti

Shankar went to Swami Prakashananda for initiation. He told the Swami, "Oh, Maharaj. I have come to Your Holiness for initiation. I must realise the Atman quickly. I want to become your most devoted disciple also. What should I do now to realise myself soon and to become your most devoted disciple? Certainly I will obey thy commands. Kindly guide me. Kindly protect me. The Swami then said: "O Shankar! I am so much pleased with you as you wish to realise the truth quickly. I shall certainly guide you. Thou art very dear to me, as you seem to be a first class type of aspirant. Give me your body, mind and soul. That is all. You can become my devoted disciple." Shankar replied: "Is that all? From this moment I have given to Thee my body, mind and soul. Kindly initiate me." Swamiji gave him Mantra and spiritual instructions. Shankar was doing Japa on the Guru's instructions.

One day, Swamiji Maharaj wanted some mangoes for his use. He could not get them in the market. He came to know that his disciple had plenty of mangoes fruits in his Purvashram garden. He sent his disciple to bring some from Shankar. Shankar sent word through his Gurubhai, "O, Gurubhai! tell my Guru that my body, soul and mind have already been given to him. What more does he want? I cannot give mangoes now. They are mean' for the sole use of myself, my wife, and children.

Look at the behaviour of this most devoted disciple Shankar. Such disciples are in abundance in these days. They talk a lot. They write a lot. They say, we have given up our lives and everything else at the lotus-feet of our Guru. He is our revered Guru, Father, Preceptor and God. When they are put to slightest test, their devotion will evaporate like Solamoniac or spirit.

27. The Story of Three Skulls

Once a Rakshasa appeared in the Durbar of Raja Vikramaditya with three skulls and told him that he would kill all the Pandits in his court if they were not able to select the best skull amongst the three within a week. Vikramaditya agreed to the proposal and at once called all his Pandits and gave them the message of the Rakshasa. All the Pandits trembled with fright when they heard the message of the Rakshasa. But fortunately there was one intelligent Pandit, Rajaram Shastri by name. He gave solid encouragement to all Pandits and told the Raja that he would select the best skull for the Rakshasa without any difficulty.

After seven days the Rakshasa again repaired to the Raja's palace. Pandit Rajaram Shastri entered the platform and said: "The skull in which this iron rod would enter from one ear to the other is the worst one. It is not worth even a farthing. That skull in which the iron rod would pass from one ear towards

the mouth is the middling one. And that skull in which this rod would pass from one ear to the heart directly is the best of all." He then handed over the best skull to the Rakshasa. The Rakshasa bowed and hung his head in shame and left the Durbar. The Pandit was of course honoured by the Raja with rich presents of gold, and cows.

The moral of the story is that those who hear religious instructions through one ear and allow them to pass through another ear without further thinking and practice of those valuable instructions are worthless people like the worst skull. Those who hear the instructions through one ear and talk on these subjects at least occasionally are the middling class like the middling skull. But those who hear the instructions through one ear and allow them to pass deeply into their very hearts and practise them in right earnest are the best class of people like the best skull.

Coming again to my point, mere reading and talking on the subject of success in life and God-realisation will not do. You will have to put into practice immediately whatever you have learnt from this book and become an exalted Yogi or a Gyani. This is my fervent prayer.

28. Bilwamangal and Chintamani

Chintamani, the dancing girl, advised Bilwamangal who was later known as Surdas, "O Bilwamangal! You are mad after this

nasty body of mine full of all sorts of impurities. This is the day of your father's death. You have come to me at the dead of night by crossing the river. Your whole body is stinking now. You have crossed the river by taking hold of a female corpse. The dead body that was floating in the river would have attracted several young men an hour ago when there was a little gloss in the skin and a little puffing in the cheeks. It is all flesh, bone and fat. Had you directed your mind God-wards—the fountain source for this beauty, the beauty of beauties, the Embodiment of undecaying beauty—you would have become a great saint and attained everlasting peace and bliss. What a fool you are!" This chiding and admonition opened the eyes of Bilwamangal. The illusion set up by Avidya immediately disappeared. He directed his mind towards Sri Krishna and became a great saint.

Will you also become a Surdas, my dear Prema? The chance is thrown open to you as well. Krishna is now waiting at Brindawan with out-stretched arms to welcome and embrace you. Do not lose this golden opportunity. Get, now or never, intense and burning Vairagya. If you always remember the dead body of a woman, her skeleton and the parts of which it is composed—flesh, bone, blood, urine and faeces—if you place before your mind the image of an old woman with wrinkled skin and rotten teeth or the image of a sickly woman who has mere skin and bone with a ghastly

look, I assure you that Vairagya will dawn in you now at once. That is the most powerful way.

29. Conclusion

So my dear Divine Children, you now know how to approach a Guru, what our Guru preaches and how he teaches us.

One should adore his or her Guru, as he only can dry up the ocean of Samsara and enable one to acquire essential wealth of Self.

Serve the Guru with heart and soul. Love, our Guru without any expectations. Give at least some little charity out of your income. Meditate on the lotus-feet of the Guru. You will realise in this very birth. Swamiji says this is the secret of Sadhana.

Do not try to test the Guru. Hear the wise words of great souls and follow them, children.

Have Shraddha in the scriptures and in the words of Guru.

The highest Sadhana is to serve Guru. Shravana is hearing of the Shrutis by sitting at the Holy feet of Sat-Guru. Stick to one Guru at all times.

Spiritual Preceptor takes a devotee under his intelligent and loving care and gradually carries him through the various spiritual evolution.

Even Vedas will fail to sing the glory of Guru who is the torch-bearer of wisdom !

However intelligent the seeker may be, it is not possible for him to grasp the depth of Vedanta and to practice it without the aid of the Guru or a spiritual preceptor.

Only a Guru can awaken the divine potentialities of the disciples.

You have to surrender yourself completely to your Guru. He can then transform the disciple by a look, a touch or a thought or a word.

Disciple must endure all tests by Guru and be grateful to him for guiding and leading him nicely.

If a disciple turns ungrateful, he will be miserable on earth. His lot is pitiable, lamentable and deplorable indeed.

In the Bhagawata the story is told of an Avadhoota who had twenty-four Upa-gurus, viz., the five elements, the Sun, the Moon, the sea, animals, etc., which though insignificant taught him each in its own way the supreme knowledge.

Humanity of the modern age is dominated by the so-called atheists who have no belief in God's existence or the Nature's wonderful powers. Ceaseless high-tension activity prevails in the daily life of the average man. Money only matters. In order to pull out a sinking man from the mire of 'Ajnana' the Bhagavad Gita and Yoga Sutras have been prescribed as the greatest scriptures to be studied and translated into practice. The Gita-ideal is most eminently suited to the present age.

Sadhana should no more imply a divorce or severance from normal life. It should mean shifting of one's angle of vision. Its claim over the modern man is that it strikes the golden mean between the entirely abstract speculations of a mere theorist and the overdone matter-of-fact attitude and hard-headedness of the worldly-minded materialist, and transforms both. Then, they live and work for the welfare of all humanity, carrying on the Divine Plan and fulfilling its glorious works.

"Shraddha" overcomes all vices and implants virtue, thus making one's entire life a spontaneous expression of the Supreme Power.

Troubles and difficulties come to you to intensify your faith, and to turn your mind more towards God. Pain is the greatest eye-opener. It is your teacher. "Kunti once prayed: "Oh Krishna, always give me pain so that I may ever remember You." The more adversities you get the stronger and firmer will become your faith in God. God knows what is best for you. Even some vicious persons are thriving well, because of their past Karma-phala. Swamiji says, therefore: "Do not pray to the Lord for the removal of sufferings. Pray to him for granting you power of endurance and patience to bear the calamity." A devotee alone gets many troubles, because God does not want His devotee to have any more births. Whatever sufferings he had to have (on account of past Karma) should be undergone in this very birth.

This world is full of misery, sorrow, pain and suffering. We must try to attain *Pari-purna* to melt away all sorrows and diseases.

God does not work with any instruments. He simply wills, the world comes into being. His will is omnipotent. He is ever blissful. A Jiva is bound by *Karmas*, because he expects fruits.

God is far, for those who have no discrimination, no dispassion, and who are not endowed with the subtler qualities. He is near to those who are endowed with the divine qualities. He is all-pervading like ether. So children, let us attain this most subtle "*Vastu*" near to us, nearer than our own breath. He is hidden by the veil of ignorance which assumes various forms, of lust, greed, and hatred. So let us remove this veil through *Bhakti* and meditation. Let us adore God with our unflinching devotion, so much so, that He has to assume for us a Holy form according to our desire, as he did in the case of His various devotees.

Nine out of ten people are immersed in problems they themselves did not know how to solve. Thus proving once again that every normal human being, is a prey to anxiety, fear and worry !

Yes, how can we help being anxious when we are in danger of losing a job or when we love someone who does not love or care for us ? When illness descends or we face an insecure old age ? The struggle with our environment is a part of

our heritage of being human. But we can learn to put it to our own good use. Morally we grow as we struggle. Our own fears will teach us to be bold. By keeping trust in God, living in our anxieties, we can all learn some kind of wisdom that will lessen the burden. Do not despair and imagine all sorts of horrible contingencies. What we have to remember is that, what troubles us today. We must pray to God to relieve us from these materialistic problems. Some of the most capable men of eminence also have lost this sense of perspective and have been driven by their anxieties to act in ruinous ways, to destroy them. We must train ourselves to face troubles. We cannot fly away from them.

Unfortunately Spiritual advancement has not kept pace with the modern tendency of the more easily acquired notions of the day. There does not seem to be any way out to pass into bright day light from the darkness of sorrow and misery!

Selfishness, greed egoism and hatred are eating up the man. Swami Sivananda has come to us only to drive away the evil in us and to make us perfect children of the soil by teaching us sacred acts—with his cosmic-understanding heart. He wants us to achieve peace for all time without any distinction. Man according to Saints, has to elevate himself.

‘Great occasions do not make heroes or cowards. We need courage to tackle them.’ The only adequate way is the key which is prayer.

Let us all say, "Oh, God strengthen me." How comforted we all become !

We can meet our problems bravely and wisely and clamly when we leave everything to God and do only our duty. Thus we make our lives easier, and add our bit to the sum of human dignity.

Even the so called atheists look for some super unknown help—which we call God, in their own way, when they are in distress, suffering and old age.

Why does man look for a God? Every Nation, every state and every society wants Him. Because that unconcious idea or belief is within him. It was his own heart-beat and he did not know. He was mistaking it for something external. It is the God within himself that is propelling him to seek Him and realise Him. That is his own nature. These are mysteries hidden behind the clouds of ignorance. Nature is like that screen which is hiding the reality beyond !

Every good thought and act of ours is simply tearing the veil, making it thinner and thinner, till the Truth behind manifests itself more and more. This, as the saints say, is the whole History of man. It cannot be known. In vain we try to know it.

Is there any limit to what we want in this world? Scientists of to-day have succeeded in reaching the Moon. The Satellite with the Dog in it has been sent. And the next step will

be for the man to reach ! Do you think he is satisfied children? He will attempt on getting to the Sun ! He does not realise, it is vast and unlimited and the way is long. He has to struggle very hard. There is no end to these discoveries ! The man tries to achieve and conquer in his researches with patience. It is good to be patient and persistant. But, children, by conquering these, has he solved all problems?

Beyond this world there is something which is very real. Let him know that ! Right path is hard to find. Let him first understand that the whole universal existence is God. In Him we are all one. Do not make any distinctions. Do not have Brahman, Kshtriya and Sudra feeling. Greet and welcome all alike. We must all learn to kneel and pray side by side. Let us all be tolerant towards all religions. Have no objection to eat with a Mohammadan brother or an American sister. The spiritual idea must be divine, with the idea of unity. Have a broad out-look. The Heaven that ever existed is open for one and all.

Let us all pray together jointly to the great ones of the past, the 'present and to all that are to come in future.

Unless one becomes like a child, one cannot have a vision of the truth. It is a child that bubbles with joy, drinks in the beauty of God's creation, receives and radiates unalloyed bliss. It is a child that is stainless and pure free from conceit, guile and selfishness. It is full of love. It can share its joy with all. Its eyes will be

filled with tears if it listens to a tale of sorrow. A child is indeed God's greatest gift to man. These are the virtues we find in our swamiji. He is the child of the children. He gives the simplest yet most learned answers.

"He who, through the likeness of the self, sees equality everywhere, be it pleasure or pain, he alone is regarded as the highest yogi."

You can see from this that our beloved Swamiji is a living example of the teachings of Gita and the Upanishads.

He is always closely attentive to the "lilas" or the plays of the Divine Para-sakti. He is a witness to all Maya. How can he be other than humorous in his talk? Yet all his talk is edifying and educative. Swamiji looks upon life as an eternal comedy, in which the different vrittis appear in captivating costumes and play their roles to perfection. — — —

Service ! Service ! Service ! is the very life of Swamiji. Once he said "I do not care for even Nirvikalpa Samadhi". I am prepared to be re-born, if I am born to serve the Humanity". He continued "Service has elevated me". Swamiji wants us to know that we should do service without any expectation. He often tells, "if you give charity, it is not merely helping the needy and the deserving poor. You should give charity to purify yourselves. All his service is of such nature !

Swamiji describes himself as the richest man in the world. "My heart is full", he says. "I lack nothing". He who does not have joy in his heart is conscious of a want, He is poor, however, great his possessions are". *"There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing. There is that maketh himself poor, yet hath riches"*. There is no joy above the joy of the heart. (Proverbs XIII 7) All these qualities are found in the Swamiji. He is in that sense, the richest man in the whole world !!

The eternal truth of the Gita in sloka 38 teaches us to treat praise or blame, pleasure or pain, victory or defeat all alike.

Lord Krishna says in the Gita "If you are unable to do even this, take refuge in My service, by renouncing all actions and doing everything for the sake of Me, by reading scriptures, building temples, offering flowers and fruits, and burning incense. *You will reach Me.*"

Let us all do our actions as mere offerings to the Lord, do our best and leave everything to Him.

The Great Shankaracharya says in his Dwadasa Panjarika Stotra slokas :—

- (1) "O, fool give up the desire for wealth, be discriminative and cultivate dispassion in thy mind. Be contented with what little wealth thou earnest by thine own efforts".
- (2) "Know ever that wealth is the root cause of all evil, in truth there is not

the least trace of happiness in it To the rich there is fear even from their sons, this is usual state of affairs everywhere”.

(3) “Who is thy wife, who thy son? the world is extremely wonderful. Who art thou? And whose? Whence hast thou come? O, brother, think on such subjects as these”.

(4) “Do not boast of thy men and wealth or youth; The all-devouring Time takes all these away in a trice. Having renounced all these unreal things, realise Brahman and get merged in it.

(Shankaracharya tells us in his “Hari Sharanashtakam” VI (sloka).

“Misery due to old age and birth and various diseases, due to being born as cow, dog and swine and finally being thrown into hell, all this is the result of forgetting the Lord in this world; Therefore, O, Wielder of the Conch (meaning God) I take refuge in thee”.

The reader will note the remarkable similarities between the ancient rishis of the past and Sivananda Swami's about the lofty sublime teachings and spiritual mode of uplift in the Vedantic marg.

India which is always considered as the ideal source for true knowledge, Philosophy and religion by the West, serves as a bridge between Nation and Nation.

Universal Peace Universal brother-hood, self realisation are the basic aims of every Nation in the world. They look upon our glorious Mother-land, India, as the important ethical purifying spiritual centre.

Let us all follow the glorious examples of Swami Sivananda. Let us try to achieve cultural and spiritual unity by following this Monk's instructions. United concentrated efforts by every one *by peaceful methods alone* can bring about international understanding and goodwill.

So my spiritual divine children, remember always, prayer is an indispensable necessity. Prayer grinds the flint of egoism, breaks the walls of pride, and consumes the fire of selfishness. Prayer elevates to Divinity. By prayer you dwell in the Lord.

Children of Divinity, empty your hearts and God will fill it. And you shall be all full with peace and delight. Would you not like to make your life a life of prayer and be supremely blessed?

I thank you my children of joy for giving me a patient hearing. I am sure you will be benefitted by our Guru Dev Swami Sivananda's teachings.

Although this age of Kaliyuga is supposed to be full of vices, it has one great virtue also and that is—by mere chanting of the Divine name one can obtain the reward from Hari. In Satyayuga, Dwapara, and Tretayuga the Rishis had to perform great sacrifices Tapasya to obtain release from bondage to realise God.

He who knows this and models his life accordingly, will no more grovel in darkness.

Let us not loose this chance. I solemnly declare again and again that a person constantly remembering God, in whatever name or form, will never come to grief.

Come arise now and pray. Let us all bow down to his Holy Divine Lotus-Feet and pray the Almighty to grant our beloved Master Swami Sivananda a very long life to inspire and to lead the millions of ignorant people to the light of wisdom. May the Blessings of God be upon us all. Glory to our ancient scriptures glory to our saints and Glory to Swami Sivananda.

SECTION III

SIVANANDA'S LETTERS TO VANI

1. The Divine Lord And His Presence

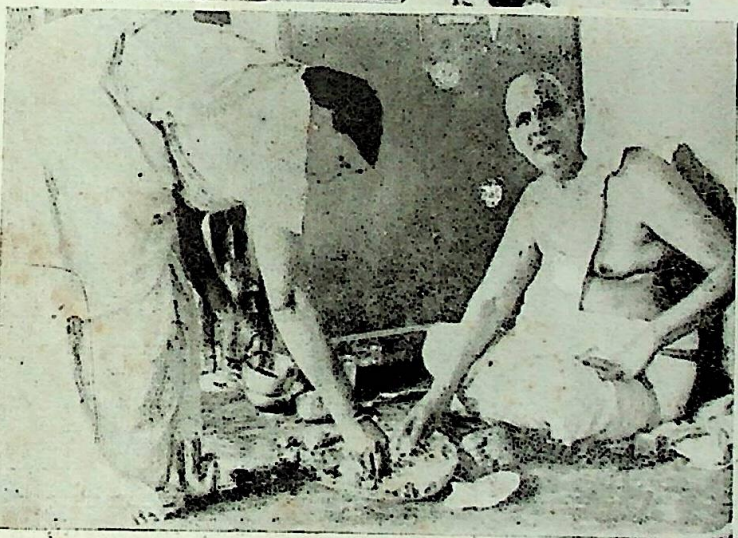
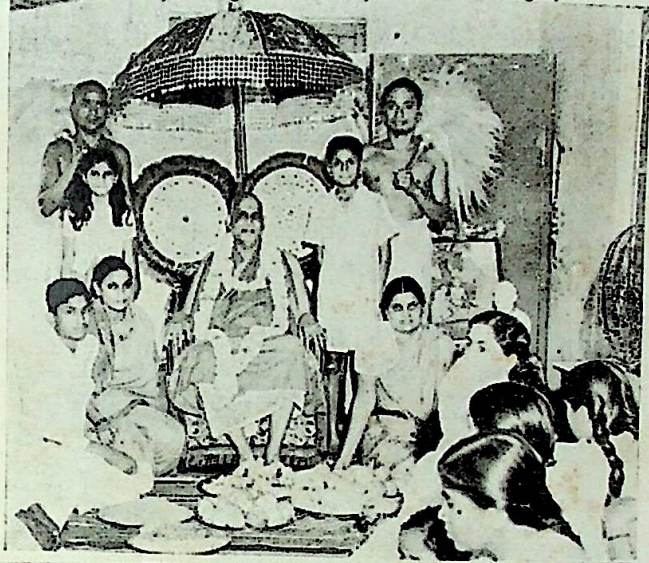
SRI SIVANANDA VANI BAI.

LUCKNOW.

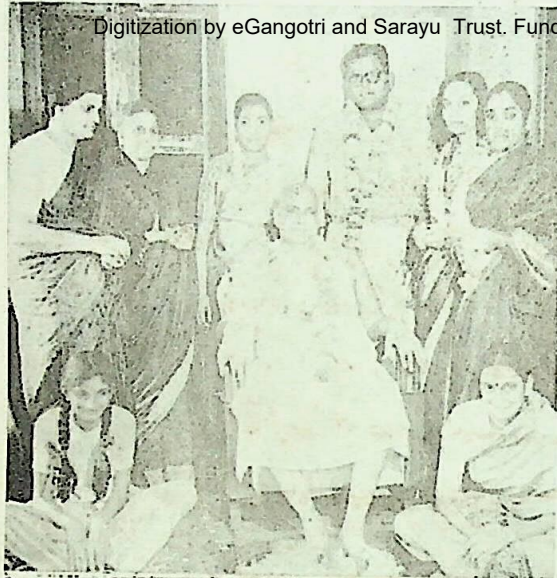
Dated : 26.7.55.

*Blessed Divinity ; Salutations. Om Namō
Narayana.*

Thy kind letter full of love and devotion. I thank you very much. I am ever with you to lift you up and guide you Under any circumstances and situations you are placed, you are not alone. God is ever with you and He will definitely look after you and take care of you. Be sure of this. He is moving wherever you go and whatever you do you do only under His Divine Presence. Feel this always. Then there is nothing to worry about or to have any anxiety. Every experience He gives you in life is to make you strong and intense towards Him. Be calm. Be serene. Be peaceful. Be patient. Keep the mind always balanced. Never perturb over anything. When once you have taken shelter under the Lotus Feet of SRI RAM what is there to be afraid or to have any anxiety at all. There is nothing. His unseen hands are ever there to lift you up and guide you and illumine your path. His Divine light is in front of you to show you the way to LIFE BEATITUDE. Every step you march onward to Him He comes ten steps nearer to you. Be sure of His Divine help at all times and



*Top: Devotees assembled after the Padapuja
Below: Vani serving meals to Gurudeva devotedly*



*Top: After the
'Padmaja,' with
the Saint:*

*Vani's sons'
laughters-in-law
and her relations.*



*Left to Right: Sivananda Vani, Lady Ramamurti,
Lt. Prasad, his wife and Sir S. V. Ramamurti, when
they visited the holy saint at Rishikesh.*

places. Have no lamentation. Have no negative ideas. Always be cheerful and joyful. Because you have taken shelter under RAM and when you have taken shelter under Him you must be peaceful, joyful and blissful.

May Lord bless you all.

My pranams to one and all there.

Thy Own Self.
Sivananda.

2. Devotion And Divine Grace

SRI SIVANANDA VANI,
LUCKNOW (U.P.).

Dated : 19.9.55.

*Adorable Mother Divine, Om Namoh Bhagavate
Vasudevaya. Salutations and adorations.*

Thy letter of recent date.

Every body in the world gets what he or she actually deserves. Nothing more, nothing less. None can bribe or fawn on God to achieve His Grace. His Grace can be achieved only by true and sincere love, genuine devotion, ardent surrender and cosmic love. You are true and devour unto Him. He Himself will see that whatever you undertake will be thorough and perfect up to the minutest detail.

OM or Pranava is the symbol of Brahman. It is the word of power. From OM this world is projected in OM it exists and in OM it is involved during cosmic Pralaya. OM is the essence of the four Vedas.

May Lord bless you.

Thy Own Self,
Sivananda.

3. The Fountain of Joy Within

SRI SIVANANDA VANI,

Dated : 7.10.55.

*Om Namo Narayanaya, Adorable, Immortal
Atman.*

I sent you a copy of the returned telegram, that was sent on the day of your joining duty at the A. I. R. Have you received it? The address was not complete. You are sweet, kind, affectionate, tender, noble, etc.

Drink up the fountain of bliss, in your own innermost self or Atma.

Cultivate dispassion and contentment. Spiritualise all your daily actions, by offering them to the Lord, by feeling that God works through the mind, senses and body.

O Vani : O spark of the Divine Flame!
Back to the Divine Flame : be one with the
Divine Flame !

May Lord bless you Vani ;

OM TAT SAT.

Thy Own Self,
Sivananda.

4. The Spiritual Inquiry

OM.

SRI SIVANANDA VANI

Dated : 15.10.55.

*Om Namo Narayanaya. Glorious Immortal
Atman.*

Thy kind letter. I shall send you some musical books and I shall also send you a list of musical books. I have sent a lot of my books to DG. (A.I.R.) Sri J.C. Mathur, Sri Keskar the Minister and to A.I.R. Library.

Know the whence you came from God. Know the whither, you go to meet God. Live the ideals. What matters is life and not mere study of books. One can teach more by his life than by his words. God is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and end, the first and last.

May Lord bless you.

Thy Own Self.

OM TAT SAT.

Sivananda.

5. Live in the Divine Lord

SRI SIVANANDA VANI,
NEW DELHI.

Dated : 25.11.55.

*Blessed Divinity, Om Namo Narayanaya.
Salutations.*

Thy kind letter of the 10th Nov.

Nothing is of any difficulty to the devotee of the Lord.

Live and move in Him. He will guide you. He will give you strength.

Lord's Name is the source of all inspiration and strength. Cling to it.

Give the mind to the Lord; hands and feet to your avocation in life.

Joy is to the pure. Peace is to the sinless. Happiness is to the virtuous. Perfection is to the knower. Immortality is to the sage.

Herewith Lord's Prasad.

May Lord bless you all with health, peace and Bliss Eternal!

Thy Own Self,
Sivananda.

6. Greatness of Divine Name

SRI SIVANANDA VANI,
NEW DELHI.

Dated : 1.12.55.

*Blessed Divinity, Om Namō Narayanaya.
Salutations.*

Thy kind and sweet letter of the 25th Nov.
I am very glad to go through it.

There is nothing which a devotee of the Lord cannot achieve in this world. You have the Grace of the Lord. You have an ocean of strength in you. Put the responsibility on the Lord and do your duty as worship offered unto Him. You will succeed.

God's Name is the greatest source of strength. So, be given to it constantly.

The chanting of the Lord's Name brightens the mirror of the mind, burns the forest of desires and bathes the whole being in a flood of joy.

Herewith Lord's Prasad. May Lord bless you with health, strength, peace and Bliss !

Thy Own Self,
Sivananda.

7. Essentials Of Life

SRI SIVANANDA VANI,
NEW DELHI.

Dated : 7.12.55.

Blessed Self, Om Namō Narayanaya. Salutations.

Thy kind letter of the 1st Dec.

I am very much pleased to go through the same.

His choicest Blessings are on you in ample measure. Carry on with your work with perfect surrender unto the Lord He will guide you, protect you and lead you on to illimitable joy and happiness.

You are, indeed, my favourite disciple. What doubt is there in this ?

The sweetness of life is devotion. The fragrance of life is generosity. The pivot of life is meditation and the Goal of life is God-realisation.

Herewith Lord's Prasad. May He bless you with health, peace and Bliss !

Thy Own Self,
Sivananda.

8. Virtue And Prosperity

SRI SIVANANDA VANI,
NEW DELHI.

Dated : 19.12.55.

*Blessed Divinity, Om Namō Narayanaya.
Salutations.*

Thy kind letter of the 14th Dec. I have noted the contents carefully. Many thanks for your loving flowers.

Do not be worried. Everything will become alright. When you have the Lord with you where can be any problem for you ?

It is through virtue one attains prosperity. Those that are virtuous and whole-hearted devotees of the Lord, their life is a continuous feast of joy, bliss and happiness. Only they enjoy life in the real sense.

Kindly convey my Prem and Om to your children. Herewith Lord's Prasad.

May Lord bless you all with health, peace, prosperity and Bliss Eternal !

Sivananda.

9. Meditate And Realize

SRI SIVANANDA VANI,
NEW DELHI.

Dated : 6.1.56.

*Blessed Divinity, Om Namō Narayanaya.
Salutations.*

Thy kind letter of the 1st Jan.

The Sadhana Week was very nice. Many foreigners are staying at present in the Ashram.

May every happiness, every glory and every joy be thine this New Year.

Close your eyes. Withdraw the senses. Look within. Meditate and realise the Light of lights that never fades.

Herewith Lord's Prasad. May Lord bless thy goodself and thy children with health, peace and Bliss Eternal !

Thy Own Self,
Sivananda.

10. Nature Of the Atman

SRI SIVANANDA VANI,
NEW DELHI.

Dated : 18.2.56.

Glorious Immortal Atman, Om Namō Narayana-
naya.

Your letter is a Gopi-Vani-Geeta. It is an outpouring of Prem.

Keep up Nam Smaran, sweet remembrance of the Lord. This is suitable for a busy person. This is highest Yoga.

I have sent to you two big photos.

How kind you are ! You want to take me to Delhi for a change. But I like to remain here alone on the banks of the Ganges. I am grateful to you.

More radiant than the sun, more subtle than eather, more pure than the Himalayan snow, more expansive than the sky, more deep than the ocean is thy innermost Atman, the Supreme Self. That Atman thou art, Vani ; Tat Twam Asi !

May Lord bless you !

OM TAT SAT !

Thy Own Atman,
Sivananda.

11. Need for Vairagya

SRI SIVANANDA VANI,
NEW DELHI.

Dated : 26.2.56.

*Om Namō Narayanaya. Adorable Immortal
Atman.*

Sri Padmini must be as tall as myself now. She must be growing in wisdom too. I have got with me an old letter written to me by your Pati Dev from Lucknow.

Vairagya is the pass-port to the land of Eternal Bliss. Get this passport, Vani!

Life is a fragrance flower of which love is honey. Lead the life divine and drink the honey of love in abundance, Vani!

Freedom is in detachment: Freedom is perfection. Freedom is Self-realisation. Know thy Self, Vani! and attain freedom now and here.

May Lord bless you.

OM TAT SAT.

Thy Own Atman.
Sivananda.

12. The Triple Aspect of the Divine

SRI SIVANANDA VANI,
NEW DELHI.

Dated : 2.5.56.

Adorable Immortal Atman. Om Namo Narayanaya.

Thy kind letter.

You can invite Sri Swami Satyanandaji for lectures.

Kindly do come for a short or long stay with children. Cordial greetings. Glad to know that the kirtans will be permanently recorded. This will be beneficial to instill Bhakti in the public.

Goodness, beauty and Truth are intimately connected. Satyam, Sivam, Subham, Sundaram, Kantam. This is thy essential nature.

Vairagya or dispassion provides a shield against the temptations which beset one in this world. Vairagya strengthens and intensifies discrimination.

Tolerance for other peoples' views represents strength of a very high order.

Progress means encountering obstacles which only serve to draw the best one of those who possess courage. Be courageous. Be bold. Be cheerful.

May Lord bless you glorious Sri Vani.

OM TAT SAT.

Thy Own Atman,
Sivananda.

13. Fitness For Immortality

SRI SIVANANDA VANI,
DELHI.

Dated : 2.6.56.

*Glorious Immortal Atman, Om Namō
Narayanaya.*

I showed the photo to Sri Padmani, Mohini, Chellama, Sobha and others.

I am alright now. I have returned the photo. How kind and devoted you are! Sri Mohini and Padmini are alright. So is Nirmala too.

If you want to get pearls you will have to dive deep in the ocean. If you want to attain the Atmic pearl you will have to dive deep into the chambers of your heart through profound meditation.

Listen to silence and live in silence. Silence is God.

Wide open is the gate of immortality for those who are endowed with faith, courage, discrimination, dispassion, devotion, self-restraint, aspiration and concentration.

May Lord bless you, family and all.

OM TAT SAT.

Thy Own Atman,
Sivananda.

14. Life : A Spiritual Pilgrimage

SRI SIVANANDA VANI,
ALL INDIA RADIO,
DELHI.

Dated : 8.6.56.

*Glorious Immortal Atman, Om Namō
Narayanaya.*

Thy kind letter with the hand bill.
Sri Sushila has written to me a letter. I
will send a reply.

Sri Padmini is delivering short lectures and
singing Hindi songs.

Sri Mohini is singing English and Hindi
songs. Both are very happy.

Sri Ram Prem will come to *AIR* on 18th
inst. for audition.

Life is a quest. Life is a battle. Life is a
spiritual pilgrimage.

The world is on flames. Pure divine love
alone can quench this flame.

Salvation is not in Heaven or any other
plane. It lies in a purified mind.

Meditation is the daily food of a devotee.

To live is to serve; to live is to love; to
live is to give; to live is to realise God.

May Lord bless you Sri Vani, Om Tat Sat.

Thy Own Atma,
Sivananda.

15. The Greatest Form Of Sacrifice

SRI SIVANANDA VANI,
DELHI.

Dated : 1.7.56.

Adorable Atman, Om Namō Narayanaya.

I am in due receipt of your kind letters and the article by Sri Mohini. It is simply thrilling. Yes, you can attend Guru Poornima. Cordial greetings.

Yes, you may kindly bring Shreemati Lady Rama Murthy and Sir. S. V. R. also. Cordial greetings to you all.

Glad to know you have recorded "Mera Liye hai" "Samarasa" song. All religionists will like it.

The radio people can play it back.

The offering of ego is the fire of wisdom the greatest form of sacrifice.

Focus the entire mind at its source. The source of mind is Atma. The mind will be observed in the Atma. The Atma will alone shine in all its splendour.

Harmlessness, mercy, character, control-over senses, peace, courage, and humility are the virtues which a seeker of Truth should possess.

May Lord bless you, Sri Mohini, Padmini, Amarnath, Badri and the whole family.

Thy Own Atman,

Sivananda.

OM TAT SAT.

16. Thy Essential Nature

SRI SIVANANDA VANI,

DELHI.

Dated : 20.7.56.

*Glorious Immortal Atman, Om Namō
Narayanaya.*

Thy kind letter of 27th.

I shall send you the Bhajans and write a letter to A.I.R. also. I shall send you the snaps of Sir Ramamurthy too. Love the inner life. Love peace and silence. Love solitude.

Every day should be a day of intense aspiration, active spiritual quest and onward progress.

Hold aloft the banner of righteousness. Fight against unrighteousness.

Only one Message have I for thee, O! S. Vani. Remember that thou art the all-pervading Immortal Atma or Soul. Egoism prevents the descent of divine grace.

Love unites.

Love elevates.

Love leads.

Love purifies.

Love saves.

Therefore cultivate pure divine love.

May Lord bless you—Vani, your children and all.

OM TAT SAT.

Thy Own Atma,
Sivananda.

17. The Dissolution Of Individuality

OM

SRI SIVANANDA VANI,
NEW DELHI.

Dated : 20.9.56.

*Om Namō Narayanaya, Glorious Immortal
Atman.*

Thy kind two letters. You have described about the glory of the procession. You were all in rapturous ecstasy and forgot all body and surroundings. This is indeed a marvellous and unique experience.

I shall serve Sri P.V.R. Rao and Sri Dr. S. Mutatkar nicely, when they visit our ashram.

Mercy is the highest virtue ; forgiveness is the highest power ; knowledge of Atman is the highest knowledge.

Where there is anger there is death ;
Where there is purity there is God Himself ;
Where there is hatred there is death ;
Where there is love there is God Himself.

Make faith your bellows, self-restraint your fire, meditation your crucible, truth your furnace, 'Ahimsa' your anvil, renunciation your goldsmith, dispassion your fuel and melt your individuality therein.

May Lord bless you, Sri Vani.

Thy Own Atman,
Sivananda.

OM TAT SAT.

18. The Changeless Reality

OM

SRI SIVANANDA VANI,
NEW DELHI.

Dated : 3.10.56.

*Om Namō Narayanaya ; Glorious Immortal
Atman,*

Thy kind letter. Kindly do the new allotted work bravely. You will get Divine grace, new added strength, vigour and intelligence. You can surely do that. I shall serve you nicely. Go ahead. March on fearlessly, O Adhyatmic hero. Think anew. Act anew.

Motion and change can be known only in relating to something that is static. There must be something absolutely beyond all motion and change. That is "Atma" or the Supreme Soul. That is your Self. "Tat Twam" Asi, O Vani!

Develop the strength of the spirit through meditation and discipline.

The objects have no reality of their own. They appear on the real Brahman or pure consciousness.

May you attain Infinite Strength, Infinite Intelligence and Infinite Peace, Vani!

OM TAT SAT.

Thy Own Atman,
Sivananda.

19. Experiences In meditation

SRI SIVANADA VANI,
NEW DELHI.

Dated : 29.10.56.

*Om Namo Narayanaya. Blessed All-blissful
Atman,*

Thy kind letter.

Glad to know that your Japa and meditation go on with your work very well. This is the practice of Synthetic "Yoga" which will remove "Vikshepa" and make one strong and steady even while remaining in the world.

During meditation, many kinds of desires will spring to retard your progress. Free yourself from their trammels, make the heart absolutely pure and cognise through your higher mind your own "Atma" or Reality. Then all illusions will vanish completely, and you will attain the immortal Bliss of Para Brahman or the Absolute.

Truth, Beauty and Goodness are the three supreme values for all human existence.

Truth is Beauty and Beauty is Truth.

The true fountain of eternal life and bliss is within you. Gaze within, dive deep into the holy fountain and drink the nectar of Immortality, O Sivananda Vani.

May Lord bless you and all. May Lord bless you.

OM TAT SAT.

Sivananda.

20. The Relationless Absolute

OM

SRI SIVANANDA VANI,

A.I.R.

NEW DELHI.

Dated : 10.11.56.

Om Sri Ramaya Namah, Supreme Eternal Atma.

Thy kind letter. I have sent some books to Sri simple Mohini, to her Lucknow address. I trust she is free from fever now.

You need not be anxious of anything. A brilliant future is awaiting you. March on "Adhyatmic" hero boldly, fearlessly, courageously. Be regular in your "japa," "kirtan," meditation and study. Keep "Nama smaran" always. This is the Supreme "Adhyatmic" tonic for everything. Your elder daughter can visit this ashram. Cordial greetings.

What is that seat where minds delusion wear away? Supreme Self or the infinite. Rest in this seat oh, Sivananda Vani.

What is that incomparable seat where all the illusions of pleasures and pain fade away? "Para Brahman" or the Absolute. Abide in this seat "hai Saumya."

What is that seat where all desires are eradicated to their root? The Supreme Param Atma. Dwell in this O, Nectars child.

May Lord bless you, family and all.

Thy Own Atma,

Sivananda.

OM TAT SAT

21. The Goal of Spiritual Endeavours.

OM

SRI SIVANANDA VANI,

A.I.R.

NEW DELHI.

Dated : 9.12.56.

Om Namo Narayanaya.

Thy kind letter of 3.12.56. The correspondence has very much increased from all quarters. Hence the delay in writing to you.

I am in due receipt of your love-offering towards the publication of Gita Drama. "Music Yoga" is not yet ready. I shall send you copies when they are ready. Sri Ram Prem is in great joy and spirit. He will be coached by Sri Nada Brahmanandaji.

Glad to know your son has become an officer in the U.N.O. He is a brilliant boy. All your children are indeed brilliant. You have done much towards the dissemination of my songs.

Self-purification is the goal of all spiritual endeavours.

The better you understand yourself, the more you are competent to understand others. Cultivate renunciation, nonattachment and discrimination.

With your mind ever rooted in "Atman" do all actions as divine worship.

May Lord bless you Sri Vani, family and all.
Herewith Lords prasad.

Thy Own Atman,
Sivananda.

22. Wisdom And Association With
Sages
OM

SRI SIVANANDA VANI,
NEW DELHI.

Dated : 17.12.56.

Glorious Immortal Atman,

I am alright. I am going to the office.
How kind you are.

Sri Parvathikar is here. Can you arrange
for a National Programme? He is a master
of Rudra Veena, Sitar and Swara mandali.

Dr. Mrs. Kagel was here. She has gone
on tour to Tehri. She will meet you, at Delhi.

Just as the butter pervades the milk, just
as the sugar cane juice pervades the whole
sugar cane, so also this Atman pervades the
entire universe.

Just as one man alone becomes many in
dream, so also the one God exists as many.

Wisdom dawns when one is in the company
of Sages. Wisdom disperses the darkness of
infatuation and ignorance, which have their
root in ignorance. May you attain this wisdom
O, Vani.

Swami Vidyananda an inmate of this
ashram, my disciple, your Guru Bhai, is a fine
Veena player.

Thy Own Atman,
Sivananda.

OM TAT SAT.

23. Pathways To Success

OM

SRI SIVANANDA VANI,
NEW DELHI.

Dated : 29.12.56.

Om Namō Narayanaya,

I am in due receipt of your greetings card. The picture of Lord Buddha is most charming. It speaks of joy, illumination and peace. May you also enjoy the blessed state soon.

Just as a spark of fire reduces in no time a heap of cotton into ashes, so also through a single remembrance of God, the sins of hundreds of births are reduced to ashes.

The Gods also desire to be born on the sacred land of "Bharat" in order to store up great inexhaustible merit.

Listen and understand. Think and reflect. Discriminate and meditate. Tread the path of self-realisation. Now success is yours,

May 1957 give you whatever you want, the peace of the Eternal, the joy of oneness, the bliss of that immaculate seat of prosperity of this plane.

OM TAT SAT.

Thy Own Atman
Sivananda.

24. Spiritual Excellences & Cosmic Love.

SRI SIVANANDA VANI,
NEW DELHI.

Dated : 28.1.57.

*Glorious, Immortal Atman. Om Sri Ramaya
Namaha.*

Thy kind letter.

You have done something for Sri Parvathikarji. This is Lords Grace. You had his kirtan in your cottage and made it "Vaikunta".

I am better.

"Whatever is to happen will happen". This will give great satisfaction. This is the immutable law indeed. "Thy will be done" O, Lord.

Attend regularly to "sadhana."

Introspection is necessary for scrutinising your motives.

Rest peacefully in your inner self.

Wealth of "Atman" is the real inexhaustible wealth.

Develop cosmic love.

Sensual pleasure is pain in disguise.

Eradicate self-justification.

Life is fight for perfection.

Develop the power of endurance.

May LORD bless you Vani with illumination, insight, intuition.

Thy own Atman

OM TAT SAT.

Sivananda.

25. God-realization

SRI SIVANANDA VANI,
NEW DELHI.

Dated : 9.2.57.

Sri Om Namō Narayanaya

Thy kind letter.

We will all hear the Kirtan on Sri Rama Navami day. That is good.

True wealth is wisdom and lack of wealth is poverty.

The end of mans evolution is attainment of God-realisation.

To realise God is your duty.

God-realisation is your birth right.

Develop strong yearning for God-realisation.

You are the master of yourself.

Worship the poor.

Have confidence in yourself.

Be self-controlled.

Be fiery in your determination.

May God bless you.

OM TAT SAT.

Thy Own Atman,
Sivananda.

26. Nature of the Divine Reality

SRI SIVANANDA VANI
NEW DELHI.

Dated : 21.2.57.

Glorious Immortal Atman,

Thy kind letter.

Glad to know that my bhajans will be sung by the artists.

Yes you can come. Cordial greetings.

I am in due receipt of your kind offering.

Good and sublime thoughts are the fragrant flowers that grow in the garden of a Sadhakas mind. They make life good, glorious and grand.

The Reality is full and perfect. He who realises God becomes also full and perfect.

Behold, O, Vani, Divine thou art. Bliss is the very essence of your life. You are by nature immortal and pure. You are the supreme light of lights.

May Lord bless you Vani.

OM TAT SAT.

Thy Own Atman
Sivananda.

27. Mind and its Control

SRI SIVANANDA VANI
DELHI.

Dated : 10.3.57.

Om Sri Ramaya Namaha,

Thy kind letter and offering to Lord Viswanath. Pooja was done in the temple and prasad was sent to you.

Your letter breathes devotion in every line. It is full of divine vibrations.

Shri Varalakshmi will improve in her health. Pray and do Mrityunjaya japa for her.

Fight the "Mara" or Satan with the sword of knowledge.

Watch the mind. Restrain it. Have a well directed mind, which confers very great benefits.

Make straight the mind. Restrain the mind. A subjugated mind is conducive to happiness.

Be endowed with harmlessness, forgiveness and steadfastness. Have constant balance of mind.

May Lord bless you Vani, your children and all.

OM TAT SAT.

Thy Own Atman
Sivananda.

28. Hard Disciplines for Self-realization.

SRI SIVANANDA VANI

NEW DELHI.

Dated : 17.3.57.

*Om Sri Ramaya Namaha, Glorious,
Immortal Atman,*

On 8th April we will hear the kirtan Joy !
Satish Bhutani was here. He sang good soul
stirring bhajans.

One attains self-realisation by hard self-
discipline, by truth, by thoroughness of know-
ledge and by purity.

Worship God and trample the head of
Death in contempt.

Worship of God is one's foremost duty.
Contact with saints is the highest good.
Fix your heart on dispassion or "vairagya"
May Lord bless you, children and all.

Thy Own Atman
Sivananda.

29. Denotion to the Spiritual Ideal

SRI SIVANANDA VANI

Dated : 29.3.57.

*Om Sri Ramaya Namaha, Glorious,
Immortal Atman,*

Thy kind letters.

All enjoyed the music at 8. am. It was thrilling and soul-stirring indeed.

Ram Premi is in his native place. He is trying to bring one Oriya translation of *Japa Yoga*, etc.

Kindly send me a copy of the listener 24th to 3rd March. Yes, you can come here. Cordial greetings.

I will meet your son when he comes to India. I fully know that his mind will be changed. Have tremendous faith. Be patient and prayerful. Live in constant thought of the Lord.

Give your heart and soul for the spiritual ideal. Lead a life of simplicity, austerity, self-control, endurance, dispassion, humility and service.

If there is intense sincerity and earnestness of aspiration the Lord will surely fulfill your spiritual thirst for the divine life.

To curb a harmful "vritti" or thought wave, entertain its opposite.

May Lord bless you and all.

Thy Own Atman,

OM TAT SAT.

Sivananda.

30. Purification & Illumination

SRI SIVANANDA VANI

A.I.R.

NEW DELHI.

Dated : 6.4.57.

Om Sri Ramaya Namaha,

Thy kind letter with enclosed cuttings. Dissemination of Lords Names is the highest yoga cum yagna. You have done a very great thing indeed.

You can come once a month to the Ashram. Cordial greetings.

Purify. Purification leads to illumination.

The way to self-realisation is the way of self-denial, non-attachment, renunciation, aspiration and meditation.

Love is the ultimate reality. Love is the key to every problem. Love is the key to open the door of the realm of eternal bliss.

Endeavour to realise the presence of God as a living power in your life.

Discipline is the training which corrects, moulds, strengthens or perfects. Therefore discipline the senses and the mind.

May Lord bless you.

OM TAT SAT.

Thy Own Atman,
Sivananda.

31. Ignorance and the Works of Ego

SRI SIVANANDA VANI,
NEW DELHI.

Dated : 27.4.57.

*Om Namo Narayanaya, Adorable, Immortal
Atman,*

Thy kind lengthy letter. To convince the doubting aspirants miracles happen. The Roorkee miracle was one of this kind.

You have poured forth your entire heart in the letter. Every line breaths the spirit of devotion and dedication.

Steady practice, accompanied by non-attachment and renunciation (mental) leads to quick God-realisation.

“Vasana” is the ignorance which enslaves us in sensual objects after giving up true discrimination.

The ego subjecting itself to the clutches of “vasana” which make it to be transformed into the objects it sees to the exclusion of others, fancies that object to be real and is deluded by the same.

May Lord bless you, family and all.

Thy Own Atman,

OM TAT SAT.

Sivananda.

32. Thought and Desires

SRI SIVANANDA VANI
NEW DELHI.

Dated : 16.5.57.

Om Sri Ramaya Namaha,

Thy kind letter.

Shrimati Hira Bai Barodkar and Sarswati Rane sang beautifully. They were awarded beautiful titles.

Kindly write the life book first. Then take up the musical book. May Goddess Saraswati dwell in your tongue, mind and heart.

Sri simple Mohini, Badri, Amarnath and Padmini and others can come. Cordial greetings. You can also come frequently.

Have the wealth of desirelessness. It is the supreme, inexhaustible wealth. It is the spiritual wealth of Moksha. Desire is the motive force that makes the mind move.

Desire and thought are closely connected. Every thought is prompted by the desire that stands behind it.

Desire is the fuel. Thought is the fire that is kept up by the fuel of desire.

May, Lord bless you all. May you be established in that state of desirelessness, of moksha.

OM TAT SAT.

Thy Own Atman,
Sivananda.

33. Transforming all Actions into Yoga

SRI SIVANANDA VANI
NEW DELHI.

Dated : 6.6.57.

Om Namo Narayanaya.

Thy kind letter.

You do deserve.

You can send the MSS for editing.

You will get inner spiritual strength to finish the sublime and lofty work you have undertaken. Let Goddess Saraswati dwell in your tongue and heart and mind.

Glad to know that Sri Jayaram has obtained the Doctorate at the Carnell University.

I will have to enquire about your articles for the last years Birthday Sovenir.

Your mainstay should always be truth.

Convert every action of life into yoga.

Meditate on the Supreme being in your highest ideal, your practical God.

Truth is the law of life.

Duty for the sake of duty, not for the acquisition of anything outside oneself, is the rule of the good and wise life.

May Lord bless you, Vani, and children and all.

Thy Own Atman,

OM TAT SAT.

Sivananda.

34. Faith and Value of Suffering

SRI SIVANANDA VANI
NEW DELHI.

Dated : 19.6.57.

Thy kind letter and "Children's Sivananda" manuscripts.

I am alright.

Your writings are very nice. They are very simple but instructive and charming. They contain the essence. Kindly go ahead and finish it as soon as possible.

The one you seek is He who seeks you. Faith is strong. In the measure in which you have faith, you will achieve. Suffering and pain open the door of wisdom. Behold the one essence in all. Love all. Know thyself and be free. This is the essence of religion.

May Lord bless you and all.

OM TAT SAT.

Thy Own Atman,
Sivananda.

35. Description of an Ideal Person

SRI SIVANANDA VANI

NEW DELHI.

Dated : 27.6.57.

*Om Sri Ramaya Namaha, Glorious, Immortal
Atman.*

Glad to know that Dr. Jayaram is now with you. He is a glorious, and brilliant doctor indeed. He will do something grand to the world. You have seen him after four years. You naturally have enjoyed inexpressible joy when you met him. Kindly arrange for his marriage soon. Let him take his partner to America. This is important.

An ideal person is one who leads a dedicated life, who is calm and unperturbed ; who serves humanity selflessly, who is full of joy, who loves all, who prays and meditates regularly and who lives in the eternal.

In self effacement or annihilation of this little "I" is true Immortality.

Do "sanga" "tyaga". Sanga is the impure "vasanas" of love or hate entertained by the mind in the diverse objects of the world. Sanga is connection of the mind with "vasanas".

May Lord bless you, children and all.

OM TAT SAT.

Thy Own Atman,
Sivananda.

36. The Practice of Goodness

SRI SIVANANDA VANI,
NEW DELHI.

Dated : 2.7.57.

I am anxious to meet your son Sri Jayaram. Cordial greetings to him and to you also (Guru Poornima greetings).

Mistakes are lessons of wisdom.

The past cannot be changed. The future is yet in your power.

Sin is only a mistake. It is misdirected energy.

If every one practices "Be good. Do good" peace will reign on the earth undoubtedly.

May Lord bless you, Sri Jayaram and all children.

OM TAT SAT.

Thy Own Atman,
Sivananda.

37. Grihasthashrama and Selfless Service

SRIMATI SIVANANDA-VANI,
NEW DELHI.

Dated : 16.7.57.

Blessed Immortal Atman, Salutations and adorations. Om Namō Narayanaya.

I am grateful to your noble self for the kind invitation to the Wedding of thy blessed son Lt. Madhava Prasad, with Smt. Saraswati. I have conducted prayers for their health, long happy married life, peace and prosperity.

They enjoy the Lord's richest blessings already. Sri Madhav Prasad has his own parents' glorious example in ideal household life. He knows now that at every stage, the goal of life is one, *viz.*, realising that one's own innermost Self is the fountain of Peace and Bliss, the only Reality behind all appearances. "Grihasthasrama" is the best ground for the attainment of cosmic consciousness through selfless service charity, Japa, meditation and cultivation of cosmic love.

May Lt. Madhava Prasad and Saraswati enjoy both Bhukti and Mukti ; May they shine as saints and as parents of *Yogis* !

May God bless you all ! With regards,
Prem and OM.

Thy Own Self,
Sivananda.

38. Yoga, Religion, and Life

SRI SIVANANDA VANI,
NEW DELHI.

Dated : 18.7.57.

Om Sri Ramaya Namaha.

“Yoga” should be practised at all times.

The purpose of yoga is to realise the ultimate values of life the Transcendental Truth, Goodness, Beauty and Love.

Religion and life are very intimately connected.

Religion means the cultivation of the inner life and the attainment of spiritual freedom.

May Lord bless you, children and all.

OM TAT SAT.

Thy Own Atman,
Sivananda.

39. God-realization through Intense Sadhana

SRI SIVANANDA VANI,
DELHI.

*Adorable, Immortal Atman, Om Namō
Narayanaya.*

Thy kind letter and a pot of Sweetmeats, sent through Sri Ram Prem. It is a good thing that Sri Ram Prem came along with you to Delhi. But his voice was not good for audition. It can be done next time.

Kindly come with all children. Cordial greetings.

I ate the sweets and distributed to some of the visitors and inmates also. Through self control, purification and meditation plunge yourself in your peace and realise the Supreme and All-pervading Atman or Lord.

You are never alone. The Lord is constantly by the side of His devotees inseparable even as the breath is to the body.

Be always full of joy and cheer. Lead an ideal life. Let absolute selflessness and Spiritual "sadhana" be the guiding motto of your life.

May Lord bless you and children and all.

OM TAT SAT.

Thy Own Atman,
Sivananda.

40. Search for the Divine and the Importance of Meditation

SRI SIVANANDA VANI,
DELHI.

Glorious Immortal Atma, Om Namō Narayanaya.

Thy kind offering.

Kindly attend the Guru Poornima function. Cordial greetings of peace, joy and prem.

Kindly let me know the address of Sri Mohini. Glad to know that your Son has reached London now on his motor bike.

All objects are coated over with the varnish of destruction. Seek the Immortality. Intuition is the Keynote to religion. Prayer and meditation are a silent communion with God's Presence.

Shut out the door of your senses through "Pratyahara" when you pray and meditate.

God is the silent presence and power.

Meditation bestows wisdom. Meditation brings peace.

Meditation opens the door of intuition.

Meditation leads to illumination.

Therefore meditate, meditate, meditate.

May Lord bless you, Vani.

OM TAT SAT.

Thy Own Atma,
Sivananda.

**Sivananda's telegram to Sivananda Vani—
on her appointment at the A. I. R. Delhi.**

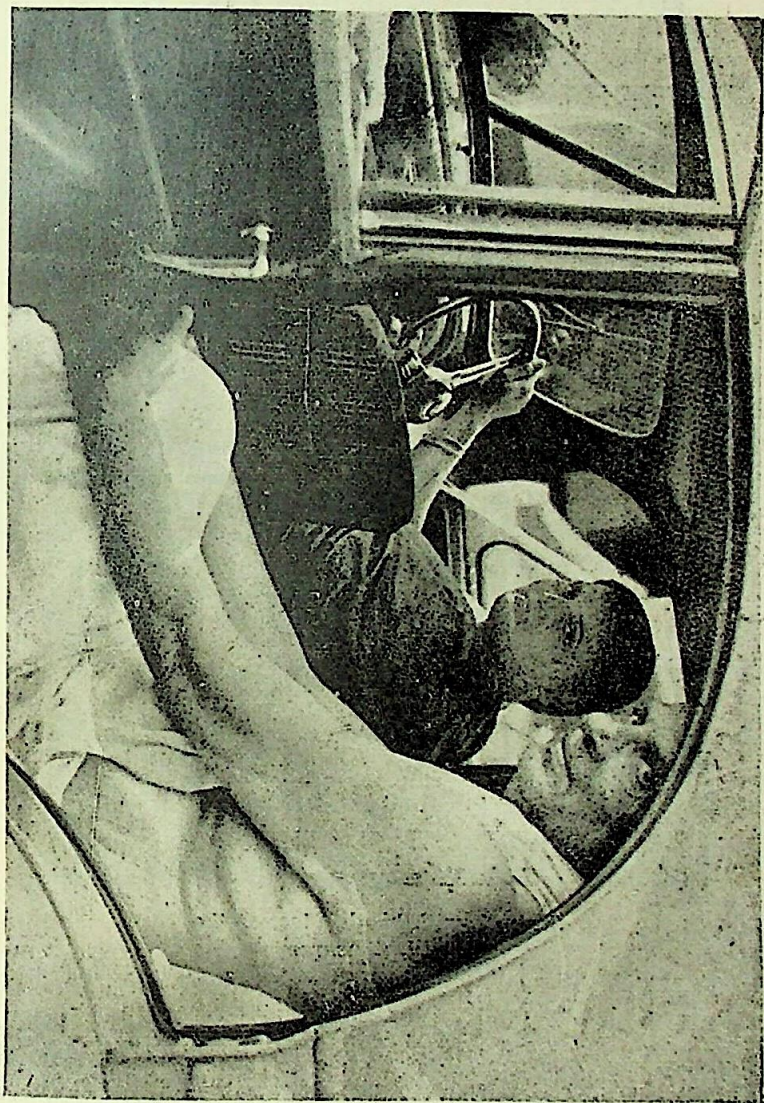
Have conducted special prayers for prosperous career success in your undertakings, peace and happiness. You possess all qualifications for success — adaptability — admirability — sincerity — selflessness — nobility — dynamism — truthfulness — and regularity. You have faith in God, devotion to Guru, and spirit of dedication. You are master of both “Karnatak and Hindusthani” Music. You are Vani Saraswati Vakdevi. God bless you with health and long life.

Tattwam-Asi. Om.

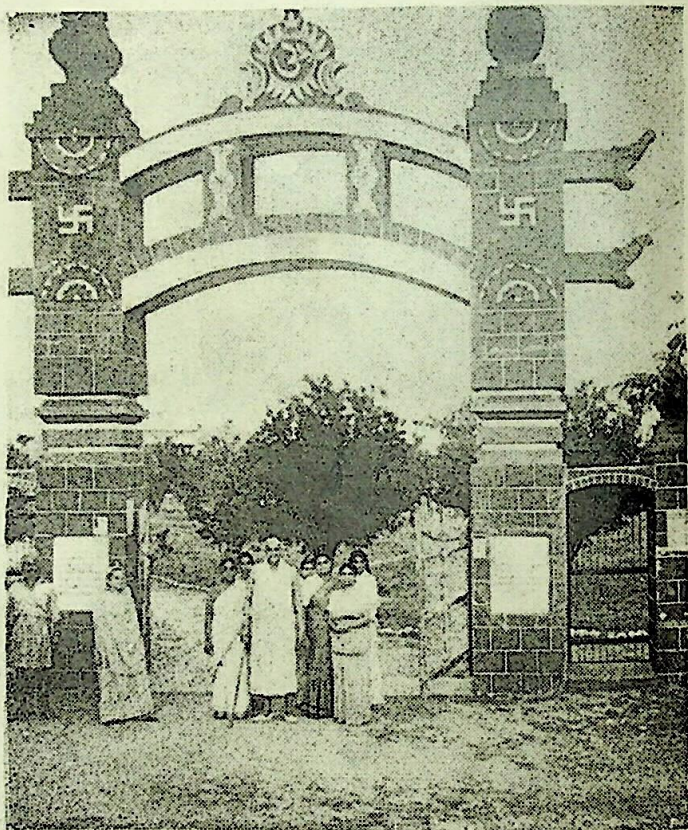
Sivananda.

शिवानन्द वाणी द्वारा रचित यह गीत आश्रम
से विदा होते समय प्रस्तुत किया गया था ।

छोड़ मुझे चले जाना है
अन्तिम दिन है आज
गंगा यमुना धारा बहती
दो नयनों से महाराज
कौन बुलावे बार-बार मुझे
गावो भगवती वाणी.....
छोड़ मुझे.....
याद कल्लेगी जन्म-जन्म तक
तेरी मधुर कहानी
हमें न भूलना हृदय देवता
बार बार बुलाना
तब चरणों की पुण्य धूलि से
जीवन धन्य बनाना
छोड़ मुझे.....
अमर रहो तुम सद्गुरु मेरे
दिव्य तेरा दरबार
शिवानन्द वाणी शिवा तुझको
बार बार नमस्कार
.....नमस्कार !
छोड़ मुझे.....



Wazir talking to Swami in how soon to the East India Co. Ashram



*Swamiji with his devotees at the
Saptarishi Ashram*

शिवानन्द वाणी द्वारा रचित यह गीत आश्रम
से बिदा होते समय प्रस्तुत किया गया था ।

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दो नयनों से महाराज,
कौन बुलावे बार-बार मुझे
गावो भगवती वाणी.....
छोड़ मुझे.....
याद करूँगी जन्म-जन्म तक
तेरी मधुर कहानी
हमें न भलना हृदय देवता
बार बार बुलाना
तब चरणों की पुण्य धूलि से
जीवन धन्य बनाना
छोड़ मुझे.....
अमर रहो तुम सद्गुरु मेरे
दिव्य तेरा दरबार
शिवानन्द वाणी शिवा तुझको
बार बार नमस्कार
.....नमस्कार !
छोड़ मुझे.....

SECTION - IV

VANI'S LETTERS TO SIVANANDA

1. The unbounded kindness of the Divine Sage

Dated : 13.9.55.

MY OWN COMPASSIONATE PUJYA PRIYA
GURU DEV.

Hearty Pranams to your Lotus Feet.

Guru Dev, I had a great wish to have your darshan. Once more before I left that Holy place.....and my wish was granted in another form !

As soon as I reached home, what a pleasant surprise it was to find a certificate waiting for me here, and also the oil tin and the Himalayan Chyavana Prash, sent by my kind and divine Master. My joy knew no bounds when I saw the title you sent me. I am very very grateful to you for your kindness and consideration for a poor soul like me. I shall try my utmost to prove worthy of this sacred title, "*Divya Jivana Jyoti*". I do not know how far I deserve it, but one thing is true, Swamiji. I have sincere devotion, faith and bhakti-purvaka-prema-bhav towards you, Gurudev. I hope I will never change. You radiate joy in me. Without your thoughts there is no happiness. My regard for you is million times greater than the love I have for my own children. I have only intense "Bhakti" for you who are guiding me to the right path. I have absolutely no other desires.

Swamiji, this time I could come back from the ashram with a brave heart as I knew I could see my Swamiji whenever I wanted. I feel Guru Dev is always with me, I am ^{so} fortunate. God is very kind.

Pranams,
Sivananda-Vani.

2. The Photo and the Divine Personality

Dated : 4.10.55.

ADORABLE PUJYA PRIYA GURU DEV.

Pranams.

It was a real pleasure to receive your big photo and also some "Prasad". What a kind father you are my own Guru Dev! How can I thank you? I got the big photo also nicely framed here, along with the other smaller photos of yours and hung them in my office room and they have given the room full grace and to me the inspiration. I am able to sit down and do my work only by looking at your divine Personality in the photo. I am just learning to understand my duties here and am getting some confidence now by God's grace and your kind blessings.

Sivananda-Vani.

3. Constant Remembrance of Gurudev

Dated : 21.7.55.

MY OWN ADORABLE GURU DEV.

Countless Sashtanga Pranams to your Holy divine feet. Despite the many hardships here, I have not stopped any item of my sadhana, Sri Ram Nam and my Guru Nam is constantly in my mind, whatever work I am doing and if I may say so without boasting, even in my sleep. Only that is giving me strength, courage, and endurance.

Whenever I am on the verge of losing temper, I remember Gurudev's words. "Be tolerant, adapt, adjust, accomodate." I only wish to do my duty for the little children who are all under my charge here and then retire and come away, I am counting the days! My mind is always at Ananda Kutir.

Swamiji, just this morning only I got your Guru Purnima Prasad! I opened the parcel anxiously and found my Gurudev's lotus hand stretching out offering me the prasad. Oh! how happy I felt. I distributed the prasad to all.....

In the afternoon I was in great distress and difficulty for some reason, and was praying to you. Lo! in the evening I received your telegram. It really comforted me with beautiful words. I thought you were talking to me! How did you know my grief, Guru Dev? How can I thank you my Lord? Have I ever

received such pure affection from anybody else in the world! No, this is the first time I am able to experience real sympathy. Your telegram was almost like a letter. There must be telepathy! Otherwise how did you know that I was calling for you, my own dear Master? You are everything in the world to me. God is so kind.

Sashtanga Pranams
Sivananda-Vani.

.....

4. The Precious Letters of the Master

Dated : 14.10.55.

PRIYA ADORABLE SAT-GURU DEV.

Countless pranams to your divine lotus feet.

I am in receipt of my master's letters of affection and encouragement. These letters are my life and breath. Your sweet, divine name is sweeter than sugar candy. For my japa, I love to sing your glories, my Guru Deva. You are my protector and guiding star. I am enjoying the supreme bliss of your magnetic presence.

Sevika,
Vani.

5. Miraculous Powers of my Gurudev

Dated : 3.12.55.

ADORABLE PUJYA GURU DEV.

Pranams.

I was immensely pleased to receive your sweet encouraging letter. My own Swamiji you are making me do some wonders here. I myself cannot believe all this. I cannot describe your most unthinkable, divine powers. I am simply thrilled. But believe me, my beloved gurudev, I am the same Sivananda-Vani. I can never feel proud ; it is thy power. I know my own ability. I fully realise the miracles that are happening to me. I feel proud to think that my own sweet Guru Dev has got tremendous divine powers. I feel happy and overjoyed that your grace is always with me and protecting me. Oh, dear Swamiji, do I deserve all this kindness from you ? What "Punyam", I must have done to come to your Holy Feet ! Guruji, day and night I pray to you. All times Ram-Nam is going on within me. Your divine presence seems to be always with me. I do not miss, my Guru Dev now. My room, where I have your pictures round me is like a temple. People when they come to see me in my office enter my room, as if it is a sacred temple. I am known as a mother by one and all. I feel overjoyed, I am so lucky to be called like that.

My talk for the Canadian listeners will be recorded either to-morrow or the day after and

flown to Toronto. In my talk which is like my own biography, I said I am a disciple of Sri Swami Sivanandaji maharaj of Rishikesh. It thrilled me. Will I ever in this life attain perfection ?

Although, Swamiji, I can feel the divine presence of yours with me everyday. I am longing to have your darshan in reality again, to touch your sacred feet with my forehead. I do not know when I will get a chance. I am a servant now, and am not free like before. I shall take the earliest opportunity. So many of my colleagues here, who have now seen your photos and read some of your books and who have heard from me all about the Ashram activities, are also anxious to have Swamiji's darshan. Some of them may be coming shortly.

...I want to bring in slowly and gradually, our ashram music also in our early morning A.I.R. devotional music. I do not know when I will be able to do it. Yesterday, our friend Lila of Greece came here. She gave me all the ashram news and also a ten rupee note with your autograph which was given by you. I was happy to see her.

Your Own Dasi,
Vani.

6. Sweetness of my Gurudev

Dated : 14.12.55.

ADORABLE SWEET PUJYA GURU DEV.

Swamiji, I cannot express my joy and ananda in words, I experienced when I read that sweet sentence, "Is there any doubt that you are my favourite disciple?" in your letter. How kind, how generous and how very sweet is my beloved Gurudev, to say that. I want nothing more in this world. I have got everything in that one sentence. How fortunate I am! I am extremely thankful and grateful to you, my Lord and Master.

Pranams from Your Dasi,
Sivananda-Vani.

* * *

7. Attainment with Gurudev

Dated : 1.1.56.

PARAM PUJYA SWEET GURU DEV.

I am reading your precious books. My adorable master, I am trying to learn as many lessons as possible from them. Swamiji, every minute of my life, nay, every time that I take my breath, you are in my thoughts. How I wish I were there for the Sadhana week. But mentally I am there my Lord. While working here, I am trying to spread the message and the inspiring teachings of gurudev. Many are so anxious to have your Holy "Darshan."

Pranams from Dasi, Vani.

8. My Friend and my Lord

Dated : 27.2.55.

**MOST REVERED AND RESPECTED
GURU DEV MAHARAJ. PRANAMS.**

At a time when I was feeling depressed and dejected, God has brought me your very kind and affectionate letter to cheer me up. I was overwhelmed with joy at the sight of those two books which I was going to order. How can I thank you adequately, gurudev, for your over-flowing kindness and generosity? Even a father or a brother could not have been more kind. I used to think I have no one in this world. I now know, I find everyone (all my dear ones) in you. Dear *Gurudev*, I am longing to come and serve you and become your favourite devotee. Will I ever be able to fulfil my cherished desire? How can I expect such a wish to be fulfilled? I have to cross so many obstacles before I could reach your feet! Nothing has so far prevented me from worshipping my guruji in mind, 'Manasik Puja'. I feel I am always near you and receiving instructions from you. I am thankful to God for bringing me in close touch with one so pure and so great.

My children were immensely pleased to find that little booklet for them in your kind letter to me. I am trying to make them also God - minded from now on. I have no attachments and I feel these children are God's

children and He will look after them. I only perform my duties here in their interests. As long as they are happy, wherever they are I do not worry. He will protect them and guide them.

I am so pleased to learn I can translate some of your articles in English into Telugu and publish in our Telugu magazines. It is like a feast to my eyes to see anything written with your own hand, my Gurudev.

Pranams,
Vani.

* * * *

9. Gurudev : The Saviour

Dated : 28.6.56.

OM, BELOVED LORD, GURU DEV.

Pranams.

Prostrations to your divine feet. Guru Maharaj, I am anxiously waiting for a letter from your Holiness. My Master, I blame the postman unnecessarily for not bringing a letter from my gurudev. Please write to me and save me gurumaharaj. Father, you will excuse me and give me the pleasure again, without which, I am completely Nil and Empty. Your letter, My Swamiji, gives me new strength and vigour, unlimited joy, hope and power and I feel elevated and like magic, your sacred blessings work wonders.

My children enjoyed their stay immensely at Ananda Kutir. Very anxiously waiting to receive your encouraging letter soon. With renewed Pranams and apologies.

Forever Your most obedient devotee,
Sivananda Vani.

* * * *

10. A Thousand Years of Life for Gurudev

Dated : 5.6.56.

The most delightful thing in the world, a letter written with my Revered *Guru Dev's* own hand was received by me this morning. How kind you are really my Lord ! I thank you with all my heart, Guru Prabhu. We, your devotees want you to live for one thousand years to protect and guide our children and grand-children too for years to come.

S. Vani.

* * *

11. Books on Music

Dated : 25.10.55.

Your most loving letter in your own hand, to my great joy. The remarkably long list of books you have sent me, even a librarian could never have taken the trouble of finding out the names and places where to obtain them, etc., and send me. I am going to order a few books straight away and start reading. I have no words to express my gratitude.

Sivananda-Vani.

12. Sivananda, the Source of All Strength

Dated : 10.11.55.

At the very outset I crave your pardon for my long delay in writing to my beloved Guru Dev. I had been and am still very busy with the coming music, folk dance festival arranged for the Prime Minister's birthday and Marshal Bulganin's visit to our capital. Folk artistes from twenty three different parts of our country have come here now to show their talent in folk art.

About 500 artists have come in all, and we have built a camp like a village in Talkatora gardens here. We are working night and day very hard, taking rehearsals, looking after their various needs, etc., I am in charge of the supervision here with Col. Gupte. By God's grace and my gurudev's constant blessings and best wishes, I am able to carry on the work quite satisfactorily. I have just come home after work. I have never worked so hard in my life. But I am enjoying it. I am myself surprised how I am able to do so much running about without getting fatigued or tired! I am very cheerful and active. I know very well, my Lord, it is your power which is giving me strength. Your dynamic force, your ability and capacity, seem to be miraculously working in me. With your powers, you can make me do wonders. I can undertake to do any work without any fear. My thoughts are always at Ananda Kutir near your divine feet. I have stopped reading and writing for a few days till these functions are over.

I feed on your thoughts, and I live and work for you. It gives me pleasure to think that I am working under your orders.

Dasi,
Vani.

* * * *

13. The Close Presence of my Gurudev

Gurudev, I have received your most affectionate letter and the gifts of books and the Chyavanaprasa. It is indeed such a great pleasure to receive anything from your Holiness. It is all *prasad* for me. I am drowned in my gurudev's kindness. God is so kind to me. It is all your "Kripa", my own gurudev. Those lines in your last letter, 'Treat your Delhi residence as a part of Sivananda Ashram' pleased me immensely.

Oh, beloved Swamiji, what else could my humble residence be, other than Sivananda Ashram? Wherever I am destined to be, it will and *must be* a part of Sivananda Ashram only. My thoughts, my mind, my soul is always at Ananda Kutir. At your holy command I have come here. I am able to do so much work, most cheerfully, on account of your grace. I do not join the idle gossip society. The only main conversation if and when I meet friends is about our ashram and my beloved lord and protector, my Swamiji. Of course, nowadays I do not find much time to sit in one place and do my *dhyān* and *japa*. But Swamiji, Lord's name is constantly going on repeating in my mind

whatever work I am doing. In the car while driving to and from my office I recite 'Jaya Ganesh', "Trayambakam" etc., etc. I try to teach these to others. So, this is like my daily 'Dhyana'. I am very happy and always cheerful. I am only longing to come to my home to see Swami Maharaj and to touch his divine feet with my forehead.

Swamiji, I do not feel you are very far from me. In fact gurudev is much nearer to me here, than actually when I am at Rishikesh. At Rishikesh I will have to share Swamiji's prem with so many other devotees. Here, I have his delightful company always with me, teaching me various things and guiding me correctly to the divine path. What else do I want in this world? I am completely satisfied. The cinemas and parties have no attraction for me. I do my work, attend some lectures or music concerts when necessary and go home. My office walls and my table are all decorated with my beloved gurudev's photographs. My house also contains photos of my own Swamiji in every room. I want to have one in a standing pose *Swamiji*, with an overcoat on. I shall be immensely happy if I can get one like that.

Swamiji, how I wish I could persuade you my gurudev, to come to Delhi for a few days for a change. How happy it will make me? How very fortunate I will be considered! Swamiji can come here in the car comfortably and take

a few days' rest and go back safely. In fact I wish to go there in my small car and bring you here driving my-self! At least if Swamiji comes to Delhi I can drive the holiest of saints in my car and make my car also holy.

How much I wish my compassionate Gurudev will agree and say 'Yes'. Please excuse me for this long letter, beloved Prabhu. Sincere Pranams.

S. Vani

* * *

14. The Approach to Guru Dev

Dated : 1.3.56.

SRI ADORABLE, GURU MAHARAJ, *Pranams.*

How surprising, that Swamiji found one letter of my husband in his papers! Yes, my husband went to Rishikesh to have Swamiji's darshan. I wasn't yet fortunate enough then to come to gurudev's feet. Well, better late than never, Swamiji. I want to be always near gurudev's lotus feet. In mind, I am always near and am very happy.

Your
Sivananda-Vani.

15. Devotion to the Affectionate Master

Dated : 31.5.56.

PARAMA PUJYA ATIPRIYA GURU DEV.

Sashtanga Parnams to your sweet Holy Feet.

We reached here safely. On the way we did not have any trouble and my small car behaved very well due to my gurudev's kripa. Before I left that place, I wanted to see swamiji perfectly normal. I am sure, Swamiji is completely free from that cough and cold and the sore-throat, by now by the grace of God. I request you again and again with folded hands my own guru dev, please take plenty of rest, Prabhuji. We all need you for at least another hundred years, Swamiji, please I beg of you not to strain yourself too much just to make your devotees happy.

With Pranams.

Dasi—Sivananda Vani.

* * * *

16. The Inspiring and Transforming Power of Gurudev's Letters

Dated : 18.6.56.

OH ADORABLE BELOVED, GURU DEV.

Pranams, thousand and one pranams to thy sacred lotus feet. Each letter I receive from you is undoubtedly giving me new enlightenment. I know and feel I am a different

person altogether now, all transformed. Mentally I have become so peaceful and calm. Believe me, my Gurudev, I am floating in your divine thoughts always. I am entirely depending only on your grace for every little action I do. I have nothing to call my own except my sweet gurudev. My children who have been probably deprived of some grand papa's affection, have found a place for affection in you, my gurudev. They said they have never been loved by anyone so much, nor did they receive such services from any one. We all adore you from the bottom of our hearts.

Sevaki,

Sivananda Vani.

* * * *

17. The Magic of the Letter

Extremely happy to receive your most magnanimous and comforting letter of the 1st July. What a remarkable power of healing you have on the broken nerves, my Master ! The moment I had that wonderful magic-like instructive letter of yours, in my hands, all my fatigue has gone and I am once again a cheerful person. Your letters are a great inspiration to me and give me solace and comfort. What can I do ? I am not able to hide my feelings and am forced to ask and request my gurudev to comfort me.

I am glad to inform Swamiji that my eldest son Madhu reached London safely on his motor bike. All due to Swamiji's blessings.

Sivananda Vani

18. The Divine Help in Need

*Dated 29.9.56.***ADORABLE PUJYA PRIYA GURU DEV.**

Crores and crores of pranams to your sacred sweet feet. Swamiji's most inspiring, encouraging and affectionate letter of the 20th gave me immense comfort to my depressed mind. Your kind letter gave me new energy. What a great relief and solace your letters are ; these invaluable letters are such a treasure to me ; I offer my sincere thanks to the Lord who is so kind to this humble useless individual. What an unique honour you are conferring on me, a poor soul who doesn't deserve all this ; I am extremely pleased.

I have been assigned a piece of brain work which requires a lot of thinking. I am feeling so nervous. I do not know how I will manage it. I am only praying to my gurudev, whom I expect to help me and make me successful as he has hitherto been doing. My Master, I know for sure, that from tomorrow, if your compassionate hand (invisible) doesn't come to do my work for me, I will prove unsuccessful. With full faith in my beloved gurudev only, I am plunging deep into this work which is very heavy for me. Please help me with your wonderful magic, my own gurudev. I know, you will.

Your Dasi,
Sivananda Vani.

19. The Divine Figure of the Master

Dated : 7.7.57.

OM Pujya Gurudeva,

Crores and crores of Pranams to your divine feet. OM Namo Narayanaya. Swamiji, my anxiety to see you is so great and intense that often I sit and see your divine figure, which is so real, through the three dimensioned glasses. It is so nice. I feel I am in Rishikesh, Swamiji.

Dasi

Sivananda Vani.

20. Aspiration for Full Grace

Dated : 12.7.57.

My Own Adorable Guru Deva,

OM Sri Ramachandraya namaha. Pranams to thy Holy Feet. I am so grateful to you for your kind inspiring letter. Swamiji, whole of yesterday my mind was there. I was worshipping the lotus feet of my beloved Guru Sivananda. When will I be in a position to deserve his full "Daya" for me? I am regular in my Japa.

Dasi

Sivananda Vani.

21. World Parliament of Religions—Commemoration Volume

Dated : 17.7.57.

OM ADORABLE LORD, GURUDEVA,

Endless streams of Pranams to your holy feet ! What a beautiful book, **WORLD PARLIAMENT OF RELIGIONS : COMMEMORATION VOLUME**. One can learn so many things, best from each religion of the world, by reading this most valuable book. Sri Bhatt, our Deputy Director General Programmes, whom Swamiji met earlier, has taken it from me for reading. It is really wonderful. He expressed his desire to have your darshan again and sends his pranams to you.

Sada Charana Dasi,
Sivananda Vani.

22. The Divine Splendour of the Sage.

Dated : 13.9.56.

My humble prostrations and Shastanga pranams to your lotus feet which are so sweetly always in my sight. As usual I had to come back from Ananda Kutir with a very heavy heart. It is not a new thing now. The more often I come there the more intense it is growing. But my divine prabhu is so kind that he is more with me always when I am far, than when I am actually near him at Rishikesh. It is most surprising indeed. Here, there is nobody else to share his love with me and I have him all for myself. I sit near his feet watching his beautiful lotus like feet to my heart's content, whether I am at home, office or asleep, it doesn't matter. My thoughts are always, everytime I take my breath, there. My work is carried on without the least effort on my part, mind, soul and heart fixed at you and my work is done.

I had a glorious time there during the holy birthday celebrations. I attended King George VI's Coronation in London, I have seen Mysore Maharaja's birthday celebrations at Mysore, and I have seen many festivities both here and abroad which were supposed to have been done with great pomp and splendour. But honestly, Swamiji, nothing was as grand a show as my divine master's birthday! None can equal this. Here, every one of us, all have laboured without the least compulsion. Every

one had that inner joy. My Lord was looking like a God, come on earth, to console and inspire his devotees, when he was seated on the "Rath" during the procession. We were all drinking that divine nectar and were intoxicated. We did not know what we were doing. Oh, Lord, what magic powers you have !

Your most valuable letters are my solace and comfort. My heart has no place for anything else. I am here only duty bound. I want to serve you my master, while I am not neglecting my children. I too have a great desire to come and permanently stay at the divine Ananda Kutir. But I do not want to miss the most inspiring and most thrilling letters from my Lord which I will not get if I am there.

Sivananda Vani.

23. Guru's Grace in Daily Life

Every action of mine, every thought, everything I did was with your help only. Not a fraction of a second even passes without thinking of my beloved Guru Dev. Your sympathetic letter gave me a lot of courage and strength to discharge my heavy duties quite efficiently. It is my Swamiji's "Kripa" only. Do I deserve such kindness ? I thank my gurudev from the bottom of my heart for all that he is doing for me and for guiding me.

Dasi
Sivananda Vani.

24. Guru : An Incarnation of God

...The lamp within this humble devotee is likely to fade off if my divine master's hand-written powerful letters do not pour in constantly with the reminders of our Supreme Lord. Beloved Swamiji, I have been waiting eagerly for a treasure of a letter like that from you for some days.

Your inspiring and encouraging letters give me as much satisfaction as seeing you personally, my own Lord. Otherwise, how can we humble devotees live ?

Your glories are our food ; your sankirtan our strength ; and your constant thoughts are our "jeevadhara". Otherwise, how can we exist ?

...What is difficult for you, who has come on earth for our sake, my own Lord ?...If I eat, I eat because you give, I work, because you ordered me to do so, I sing because I can sing your glories and our divine Lord's. I have nothing to call my own except my own master and lord Sivananda. Won't you favour me with a line as usual ? You are so kind and so very generous.

Swami Ram Premji came and broadcast your beautiful songs and the whole radio station resounded with my gurudev's holy name. They announced the songs also as "Sivananda Swami ki rachana" ...Now Sivananda Swamiji's rachana will be broadcast like Tulsidas's bhajans

or Meera's gradually from every station of the A.I.R. ! ...Oh, glorious Sivananda Swamiji !

Your most sincere and ardent
devotee, Dasi Vani.

25. The Miraculous Response

...That day, before I got all those books—the copies of “Sangita as Yoga” I was thinking to myself—“Oh, if I only had some more copies of this wonderful book, “Sangita as Yoga”, I could have distributed them to some friends. In this way I was thinking in my own mind and within a few minutes only, the postman came to my room in my office with a big bundle of books from gurudeva. And when I opened the parcel, I was pleasantly surprised to find all copies of the same book that I have been wanting a few minutes earlier ! I did not know how Swamiji could read my heart and send me so many copies of the same book that I have been wanting ! Oh, really Swamiji, I myself am astonished at this remarkable power—the magic ! This sort of thing happened to me once before, also. My Master, you are indeed God on earth come to guide us ! Which human being can do such miracles ?

Sivananda Vani.

26. The Divine Powers of My Master

Divine Master, Your astonishing miracles are wonderful—your magic powers are making these earthly innocent people wonder-struck; I am so very proud of my master's magic divine powers! Our hearts are always filled with your divine thoughts. There is not even a smallest place in my heart for anything else, but my gurudeva.....I am not myself.....I am thine. My master, I have completely surrendered to you for good or for bad. I have no words to express. I have no thoughts of my own. I know nothing, whatever you make me do, I do. My actions are thine. I am here only to perform my duties to the children.....
 ...Swamiji Maharaj, I am always at your feet, singing thy glories. Your holy hand-written letters are my treasure. I read them again and again and shed one or two tears of joy!

My lord and master, please do not take off your sacred feet from my head. I am so fortunate to cling myself to thy Feet. Your 'Namavali' is my sacred japa and kirtan. Your instructive 'adhyathmic' messages are the Vedas for me. With pranams to the lotus feet.

Your humble Sevika,
 Sivananda Vani

27. The Blessings of Guru

Many thanks for conducting prayers for our welfare.....Sri Swamiji's blessings are more than all the temple prayers as long as Sri Swamiji has kindness for us, we have nothing to fear.....

Received that parcel of Sweet prasad (Halwa). How kind my master is! Swamiji cannot forget his devotees even for a moment.

Smt. Varalakshmi is almost alright now. She has seen Swamiji Maharaj only once—last year and she has been dreaming only about Guru Dev! All Swamiji's miracles.....Wonderful! Swamiji's kirtan is broadcast on the 8th April, 57.

Pranams
Sivananda Vani.

28. Artha and Moksha

Before even my reply had gone, I am blessed with two of my compassionate Gurudev's letters! Ah, how happy the letters have made me, is just impossible to write and describe. I read my Master's letters again and again and still I want to read again. What joy! I am so lucky, my master, it is all your kindness. My heart is full of your thoughts, Swamiji's inspiring teachings and messages are my daily prarthanas. I am now fully contented. My supreme ambition was to become my holy gurudev's deserving devotee. And I am now almost on my way for it, by your grace. One day I hope, by your grace, to achieve my one

ambition that is supreme bliss! All worldly comforts are of course due to you,.....I read no other books than Gurudev's.....and other Adhyatmic books.

Pranams,
Vani

29. Glories of My Guru

My magician Gurudev! Your miraculous powers are really wonderful! To the astonishment of us all, my son who is in America has made up his mind on an important matter!I at once knew it was nothing but my master's remarkable powers which can change stone into gold and gold into stone.....It is all your grace, my Swamiji.

My Lord and my Master, I can see you here every day. Your seva, your glories are my only joy.....

Dasi,
Vani

30. Daily Darshan of Guru

Swamiji, what shall I say about the experiences I am having! All wonderful! After my office-work daily my mind flies to Ananda Kutir and am at Swamiji's sweet divine feet; some times I see my gurudev walking to where I am singing. I can see Swamiji in various poses listening to my songs.

By the time I want to feel it is all real, my dream ends and I only realise it was all my imagination! Ah, I talk so freely to Swamiji. I put so many questions to him. He graciously solves all my problems. How beautiful!

Dasi,
Sivananda Vani

31. A Miracle of Gurudev

We reached here quite safe.....but on the route near Roorkee a strange thing happened. My car which was running smoothly stopped suddenly and I did not know what the trouble was. The engine seemed to be perfectly alright. I stopped one car driver, who passed that way, but he refused to help me and went away. I was helpless struggling with the car and I started praying to gurudev. Immediately a man who looked like a farmer appeared and offered to examine the engine and help me, if possible. Believe me Swamiji! that man did not do anything, but merely touched the car and asked me to start the engine and to my great astonishment and joy, it started by itself! I offered him some money, but he refused, telling me it was his duty! It was a remarkable experience and I knew it was nobody else but my beloved gurudev himself come to help me in disguise! You were with us throughout the journey and now, too!.....Swamiji, only very lucky people can have my Swamiji's Darshan.....

Sivananda Vani

32. The Joy of the Pilgrimage

MY OWN ADORABLE SWAMIJI MAHARAJ.

OM Namo Bhagavate Sivanandaya.
Hearty Pranams to thy Holy Feet.....My joy
is indescribable.

I am swimming in the ocean of joy at the
thought of my coming there shortly.

Dasi,
Sivananda Vani

33. When My Lord Works Miracles

MIRACULOUS, POWERFUL, BELOVED
GURUDEV.

Sashtanga Pranams.

We reached here safely this morning after
a delightful stay at Ananda Kutir at thy
holy feet yesterday. I wish I could get more
and more opportunities like this to visit thy
abode and have frequent darshans of my be-
loved gurudeva at Rishikesh, who is my wealth,
and treasure and heart's delight. Is there any-
thing else more precious to me in this world ?
This Divine Ananda I am now enjoying hitherto
has nevernever been enjoyed in these forty-three
years of my life. I am a completely transform-
ed person, Guru kripa has brought wonders on
me. They have no doubt given me worldly

attainments, too, to some extent. But I am enjoying something far superior to this mere "Bhooloka Aiswarya", which is only a temporary "maya", that is inner joy and supreme bliss ! My Guru who is my God, saviour and protector is leading me nicely and guiding me to the path of wisdom, liberation and detachment—and gradually taking me to the highest state of bliss, *kai-valya* and God-realisation. I can feel that I am on my way to this highest bliss through the all-merciful master, my beloved gurudev's grace. I am clinging to thy glorious divine feet, my compassionate prabhu. Pull me up. God has taken away something precious from me in the past ! He has filled the gap by a gem of a Guru for me. God always does things for our own good. I have now no sorrows, no depressions, no anxieties. I know everything is pre-destined and will be done according to one's own fate and I understand my duties. I shall ever be true to my guru and do meditation and kirtan in my own way with a pure heart. I hope Sri Swamiji has understood me well. I do not wish to store any wealth.

Swamiji Maharaj, still another miracle happened that night on our way back to Roorkee. I know very well, that the greatest saint in the world, my master Sivananda, never tries to show miracles unnecessarily and uselessly, unless he thinks it absolutely necessary to show his *Prabhav* to those who are misled and to bring them round and to draw

them nearer and make them his *bhaktas*. That night after taking leave of you we started for Roorkee by car, where we intended spending the night. The weather was clear and the car was running at a very high speed. We had an efficient driver with us, and were all talking about the beautiful ashram and its founder the great Saint Sivananda, when suddenly my friend, said: "Excuse me Mrs. Ram, I like everything about the place and I also agree that Swamiji is a compassionate kind man, but I do not approve of".....before he could finish the sentence suddenly on that clear road, a huge whirl-wind came just where our car was, and made us all completely blind and scared. The driver applied the brakes with a big jerk, as he could not see anything in front. We all exclaimed in wonder and said Ram-Nam and soon everything became clear and we proceeded on our journey. After running a few miles, the gentleman continued his sentence and said: "he did not like the edification.....". As he was saying this again the huge whirl wind blew in such a force, more intensely than before making us completely blind, fearful, and scared. Once more, suddenly the breaks had to be applied and my friend with fear, shouted at her husband 'Stop—do not say anything more about this.' So to say, she ordered him not to talk anything against gurudev. We all got frightened. I started repeating 'Maha Mrityunjaya mantra japa'. We were all repeating Ram-Nam. No talking was done and nothing happened. The wind stopped and we started. What

a miracle! We all knew you then! My Swamiji, I was feeling so proud of you at heart!You are residing in my heart. My whole body is filled with thoughts of Sivananda! You can tear open my heart and see if there is a place for any other thought in my mind.....

Thy Own Dasi,
Sivananda Vari.

34. Guru Dev and the Challenging Experience

My Lord, please excuse me for not writing to my sweet gurudev all these days. Not a second can pass without the thoughts of Gurudev. I am living on that sacred name. I am drowned in the deep devotion of my revered Gurudev. What else do I want? I am very happy. The other day Swamiji, as I was working in my office I met a very challenging experience with a greater challenge. A stranger, not a very well dressed man, entered

my room in my office one day and in a loud tone asked me to remove Swamiji's picture from there. I was very calm and did not say a word, and only looked towards other persons who were present there. Every one was surprised and they drove him out. That man could not enter my office again. Swamiji at once I told everyone there, that these are all tests on me ! My kind master, I feel happy and elevated when such miracles happen. All this is guru kripa. I am so grateful to you.

From America, my second son, Jayaram, is coming to India and expressed a desire to see the great saint who has greatly influenced his mother and transformed her completely with his marvellous magical spell !

Sivananda Vani.

35. Sivananda and Sivanandanagar

It was with a very heavy heart that I left the ashram yesterday morning. Throughout the way I felt like turning back and going to the heavenly abode, not caring for the results or what may happen ! From the beautiful, peaceful atmosphere there, I was pushed back once more to this materialistic world. I remained there only one day for this time. Swamiji must make me come there more often. This time I did not have the satisfaction. Those few minutes, I sat near my beloved gurudev's lotus feet, it made me forget the whole world. Sweet Father, I want more opportunities like

that. Please call me. The chocolates given to my daughter Padmini by your goodself were received by her with immense joy as they were given by you with full love.

Maharaj, compassionate father, I know you are more kind to young men out of pity, for their ignorance. Showering your affection on such ignorant persons, you will gradually try to remove the veil of ignorance from them and transform them.

Sivananda Vani.

36. The Thread of Spiritual Protection

I could understand and feel the intensity of your affection towards your humble devotees like me, now, when I received the divine thread from you to relieve my pain in the back. Beloved Guru Maharaj, how gracious and kind you are! You cannot bear even to hear the pains and sufferings of your disciples.

I have used the thread as per directions, as I knew it would be a '*Raksha*' from all ailments etc. and since it has come from my kind gurudev, touched by his divine hands. I am so very thankful to you, my Swamiji.

Sivananda Vani.

37. The Greatest of the living saints

Sashtanga Pranams to your divine holy feet. Sweet guruji, how can I describe to you my ananda when I received the precious letter

from you. I was immensely delighted and overjoyed at the sight of my gurudev's letter, and when I found the whole letter in your own hand, my joy knew no bounds. How fortunate I am. A great saint calling me in such glowing terms. Gurudev has taken me to the heavens with those honey-like tributes. I thank you, my Lord, most heartily. I am now getting from you all that I was longing for during my last so many births. At last, god, out of compassion for me, has brought me face to face with this greatest of all saints, my own sweet gurudev, to guide me in the proper direction and also to cheer me up.

Swamiji, I feel your divine presence always with me. My heart is filled with your thoughts only. Pranams.

Sivananda Vani.

38. Priceless Words of Wisdom

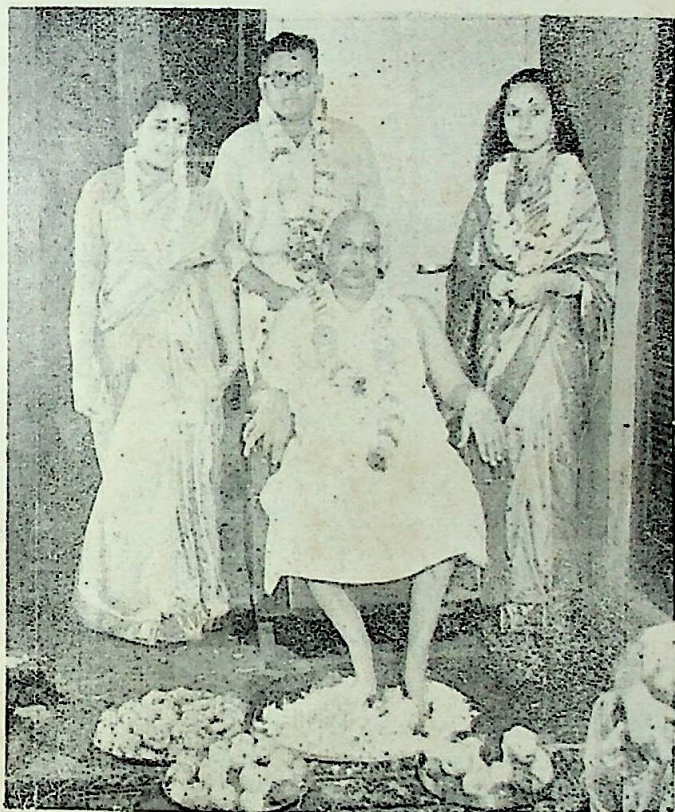
This is just to express my thanks to you... You are showering your precious divine grace on us all. Every word of yours and your beautiful instructive, affectionate letters are my wealth and rare treasure!

Sivananda Vani

39. Sivananda, the Divine Father

Your delightful letter of the 14th pleased me immensely. My ishta deva Sri Ramachandra only would have known how I suffered at heart, for not hearing from my guru dev as usual, for some time. I do not feel so much even when I do not hear from my own children who are far far away from me. Oh, father of fathers, you shower love and affection on us, your children so much, we want to be always with you or at least hear from you and learn more and more wisdom from your moral and philosophical teachings. Please my master, excuse me for troubling you so much. One line only now and then will keep me fit. Thank you ever so much Swamiji, for giving letters of introductions all over the world to my son. How considerate of you. Yes thanks, I received the copy of my son's letter to your Holiness. Yes, God is great! Swamiji, with your blessings he and his companion have left on their adventurous European tour on their motor-bikes four days back. May God protect them. I don't know where they are now!

My other son at America is getting on very well and is getting more and more merit scholarships and honours on account of your blessings. My little son Badri Nath whom Swamiji knows very well is also doing well at Ajmer. My other children also are all doing quite well in their studies. Amar Nath is standing first in all his examinations and debates. All my



Swamiji with Vani's son and daughters-in-law



Sivananda Vani and her daughter

children (the younger ones) daily think of swamiji and pray. They send their Pranams. Tomorrow Ram-Navami day, I wish I could come! But coming there just for a single day is not satisfactory to me. I may come for two days a little later on. My mind is always at Rishikesh. After my office-work and all, I read some holy books for some time and then meditate. •

Pranams,
Sivananda Vani.

40. An Old Letter of Professor V.S. Ram

LUCKNOW.
29.11.1946.

Dr. V. S. RAM
Head of the Department of
Political Science
Lucknow University,
REVERED GURUDEV,

Many thanks for your kind letter of the 25th and the books on 'Bhagavat Gita' and 'Light Fountain' which were so kindly sent with your blessings. I will take an early opportunity of coming and paying my respects to you at Rishikesh. In return I request you to grace my humble home, if and when your Holiness visits Lucknow next and show us the right path in this and in our future lives. We need your blessings

With profound respects and pranams.

Yours sincerely,
V. S. Ram.

SECTION - V

SIVANANDA'S LETTERS TO MOHINI

1. Regularity in Prayer

Dated : 1.7.56.

SRI MOHINI, (devoted daughter of Vani)

*Parasakthi. Om Hrim Om. Adorable,
Immortal Atman.*

Your article is a superb one.

Serve mother in a wonderful manner. She is a visible god. This will purify your heart.

Your English is charming and wonderful. Kindly develop it to the maximum degree. I am thy servant and the sevak of your family and the world at large.

Be regular in your prayer and meditation. Go to bed early and study at 4 A.M. after some prayer and recitation of some slokas.

Be regular. Be patient. Be kind and be tolerant.

May Lord bless you.

Thy Own Atman,
Sivananda

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2. Meditation and Study of Gita

Dated : 16.7.56.

SRI MOHINI RAM,
LUCKNOW.

Thy kind letter.

Be regular in your study. Do not burn midnight oil just before your examination.

Be regular in your prayer, study of Gita, Asan and meditation. Control irritability and anger. You will conserve great deal of energy.

Meditation is the sheet anchor of peace and poise and the enemy of ignorance.

Meditation bestows self-confidence, courage, serenity and inner spiritual strength.

Meditation stills the mind of its bubbling emotions and thoughts, removes distraction and mental discord and produces compásion and tranquility.

Therefore meditate, meditate, meditate Sri Mohini.

I am conducting prayer for your health, long life, peace and prosperity. Herewith temple prasad.

May Lord bless you.

Thy Own Atman,
Sivananda.

3. The Inner Spiritual Life

Dated : 9.8.56.

SRI SIVANANDA MOHINI,
LUCKNOW.

*Glorious, Immortal Atman, Om Namō
Narayanaya.*

Glad to know of your experiences, delighted to hear that you are regular in Japa and meditation, and study of Gita.

Love the inner spiritual life. Love peace and silence. Love solitude.

Selfless service is the gateway to the Kingdom of God.

Prayer will bring you nearer to God.

The moment the mind thinks of a saint immediately all evil thoughts will be brushed aside.

Kindle the divine flame in your heart. Let it burn brightly. Merge yourself in the spiritual illumination.

Strengthen your spiritual personality by constant prayer, meditation, kirtan, study of sacred books, selfless service. Learn music from mother.

May Lord bless you, simple Mohini, with health, long life and peace.

Thy Own Atman
Sivananda

4. The Characteristics of a Saint

SRI SIVANANDA MOHINI,
I. T. COLLEGE,
LUCKNOW.

*Glorious Immortal Atman, Om Namō
Narayanaya.*

Thy kind letter.

Glad to know you are following my instructions. You are blessed.

You can bring your friends to Ananda Kutir. You should study hard but you should not lose your health. Take care of your health. Be regular in your meditation, prayer and yogic exercises. Accepted Sri Amarnath's pranams and good wishes.

He whose craving is annihilated is a calm sage.

He who is free from anger, lust, greed, egoism and jealousy is indeed a sage. He who calls nothing in this world as his own, who speaks wisely, who is not elated by success or gain, who is not depressed by failure or loss is a sage.

He who does not crave for sensual pleasures, who has no attachment, who is independent is a sage.

Become a sage, O, Mohini !

May Lord bless you.

Thy Own Atman.
Sivananda

5. The Supreme Duty of Self-Realization

Dated : 6.6.57.

SRI SIMPLE MOHINI,

Om Namo Narayanaya.

Thy kind letter.

You need not thank me. You have every right.

Yes, you can come at any time. Cordial greetings.

Read the daily editorial columns of daily papers. You will improve your English and prepare for your future journalist career. Note down in a note book all phrases, idioms and other matters, you learn daily and use them in proper places. Have daily practice and study. Pray and work.

Every action of yours should be directed to the universal good.

Self realisation is the ideal of every human being. It is the goal of every individual in this world.

All duties in life are accessories to the supreme duty of God-realisation.

Dharma or righteousness is the law of moksha or emancipation. Serve mother. Matru Devo Bhava.

May Lord bless you, simple Mohini. May you shine as a yogi, journalist.

Thy Own Atman
Sivananda

SECTION-VI

MOHINI'S LETTERS TO SIVANANDA (*Daughter of Sivananda Vani*)

1. Homage to Gurudev

Dated : 17.11.56.

MOST ADORABLE AND SWEETEST FATHER,

Countless pranams at thy most holy feet. Gurudev, by thy infinite grace I am free from fever. I reached Lucknow, and gurudev, what a big store-house of wealth was awaiting me. I was thrilled to see thy autograph and blessings on the first page of the books. Throughout my holidays I was so very disappointed that I could not come to Ananda Kutir with my friends but gurudev, thou hast compensated me with thy blessings. I pray to thee my divine father make me worthy of thy blessings. I was feeling home sick for "Ananda Kutir" and at that moment I received those most precious books...Gurudev, you have given me courage. How can I ever thank, my God, for whatever he has blessed me with? My father, I pray for thy continued blessings. I hope during my December holidays I will be able to come to "Ananda Kutir".....It is all thy will.

I sing thy English songs.....and I feel thou art listening to me and correcting me. Ananda Kutir has changed me. I

have learnt all I know from there only. I am sure Swamiji, thou art "merciful, wonderful" as ever. My American and Burmese friends send their pranams to thee. They want to visit Ananda Kutir once more. With innumerable pranams.

Thy Child,
Simple Mohini,
LUCKNOW.

2. Wisdom and Musical Notes of Sivananda

Please bless me Divine Father! That I should be there in September. This morning I have missed the soft sweet musical notes of Sivananda. Everyday I sing thy inspiring songs; for music is the speech of Sivananda.

I would not thank thee for my most memorable stay at Ananda Kutir, for, is not Ananda Kutir, my divine father's kingdom? In these few days' stay there, I learnt much more than I have learnt in my short life of 18 years. Somebody has aptly said "Each moment you stay with Siva you grow years in wisdom".

Thy Child,
Mohini.

3. The Spiritual Transformation

I. T. College, Lucknow

MOST BELOVED and SWEETEST FATHER,

I was in a very depressed mood and was thinking of Ananda Kutir when I received thy most gracious letter. What luck is mine? How can I ever express my profound gratefulness to thy kind self. I was in tears of joy and shame when I received thy letter. Joy because gurudev had written to me with his very own sweet hand and shame at the thought of being so unworthy I wondered if I deserved such a precious letter! Father, thy kindness and graciousness is boundless and matchless.

Gurudev, I don't know what thou hasn't done for me; I wonder if I am the same Mohini who entered Ananda Kutir grudgingly, in the summer of 1955. It is like months since I have seen any pictures. Instead I find pleasure in reading thy books. Gurudev by thy infinite grace I do japa and meditation regularly. I read one chapter of Gita daily. Thy books are my companions; in their company hours trip away rapidly. How can I ever repay my debt?

On the 22nd July I wanted to be at thy holy feet, so much I could see thee sitting in the 'Kutia' very patiently and smiling radiantly while the 'Pada Puja' was being done. The only solace I could find was to open the book *Guru and Disciple* and read out the occasions of 'Padapuja' from there. By thy grace I am doing well. My humblest pranams at thy holy feet.

Mohini.

4. Emperor Sivananda and His Spiritual Kingdom

It was with the early beams of sun rise that I had entered that kingdom-nay empire. It was the mightiest kingdom of the mightiest Emperor.....An abode of angels who were the subjects of the great grand and gentle God. I had entered a new kingdom with the dawn of a new day. Was I in a dreamland or a fairy land.....? It was none of these. It was a magic-land. The greatest magician of all times lived there who would just with a look transform a beast into the best being. Such was the power of that magician—that magician was no one but the emperor himself.

As I stood facing the emperor that day, in a great gush of emotion I realized how lonely I had been in the past months, how unwise were my surroundings, how much I had missed the tender teachings of my emperor, which had been shed over me last year.....as all this came over me I clung to the Lord—emperor of that kingdom in an ecstasy of joy as one would feel after imprisonment. I stood silent looking into the loving smiling eyes...fascinated and puzzled by what I saw there.

The key to that palace was humility and self surrender. As I entered the palace of the king Siva I was wonderstruck. It was the biggest kingdom on earth—protected on all four sides by the great grand giant like hills. On one side of the empire flowed the roaring

sacred mighty Ganges. The entrance to this fascinating kingdom was the entrance to the kingdom of God. One would be welcomed by the beauty and glowing colours of nature. The palace was in a valley—nature itself took care and protected the subjects. No army could invade that mighty empire for it had the strongest army—the army of faith in the weapon of non-violence. It believed in spiritual conquest and not in territorial conquests. No one in that kingdom bothered to protect their life and property for strangely enough every one there had dedicated their life and property to the Lord, king and saint Siva. Siva was the father, mother, brother, sister, husband, wife and child for the subjects. The very sound of his walking stick would command all. The more one looked at that empire the more graceful and grand it grew.

One could enter that kingdom by four huge majestic gates. They were the gates of serve.....love.....meditate.....and realise. One who would enter these gates never came out of them. Perhaps I had entered that kingdom through the lion like gate of Love.

Mother Ganges flowed with its ever soothing calmness. Whosoever entered that empire could wash away their sins in the sacred Ganges—thus that kingdom was an abode of angels who were purified by the king's prasad. The angels had only one job.....to serve their God-King wholeheartedly. In that kingdom service was full and free. The despondent

dejected, down-trodden and a dutiful devotee. No one was deprived or declined a place in that divinely palace.

The King had a magnetic personality which charmed the young and the old alike. That king was the incarnation of God in the 20th Century. The empire was built to show light to humanity. The king held the darbar day after day—and thus thousands would be taken from the ocean of misery—to the ocean of bliss. The king served the sick—both mental and physical patients. Every angel in that kingdom had its own work. No one was lazy there. Life was dedicated to serve.

Just like buds bloom forth into flowers with the sweetest fragrance—humanity bloomed forth into angels full of good deeds. Just like a flower they would be loved by one and all. They would imbibe the spirit of pleasing others. When sun shines on a lotus it blooms. Similarly when the sun like grace of the king shone on humanity they bloomed forth into angels.

The Lord king Siva has brought that kingdom from heaven and placed it within the reach of humanity. The emperor shines fully resplendent as the God himself. Thus by day it is the mightiest kingdom of the mightiest emperor but as the shadows lengthen it is transformed into a fairy land—an abode of God with angels as his subjects. That emperor is the Lord of all Earth. Truly the king of all kings. Aptly has that kingdom been called "The abode of Bliss".

May that kingdom which has been brought to earth never perish—may the Lord Siva be spared as the emperor—and God on earth for ages to come.

Mohini Ram.

5. Two Poems from Mohini's Younger Brother

OM

(a) *Siva, my Master Divine.*

O, Siva my master divine,
 Thy glories are very fine.
 In storm or in sunshine,
 They lead us to heights sublime.
 O Siva thou art my bliss,
 Every Second of yours I miss.
 Thy feet lotus must I kiss.
 It was you who brought me bliss.
 In this scientific precious age
 Is born the greatest, Sage !
 To create love, and destroy rage
 Just as the bird out of cage.

Badri Nath Ram

(b) Personality of My Father Divine.

O , father thou art like the tower,
 Excelled in charm and thy power.
 Through thy greatness many have met,
 Everlasting divine fulfilment.
 Thou hast made them prisoners of Love
 They cannot fly now like a dove.
 Beyond human reach is thy height,
 Thousands come just for thy sight,
 World renowned is thy might,
 To deluded minds thou givest Light.
 O ! Father do heed to my prayer,
 Ever insistent like-the-air.
 Keep me always near thy tower.
 May I ever be O ! God thy lover ?
 Make me prisoner of Love for ever.
 Release me O ! Father never, never !!

Badri Nath Ram

These two poems are composed
 by Badri Nath Ram, youngest
 son of Vani Mataji, aged 13.

SECTION -- VII

DOUBTS DISPELLED

1. The Need for Biographies

Swamiji, some ignorant persons put some questions about Swami Maharaj in the following manner. Kindly answer to their questions and relieve them of their doubts, Maharaj.

Question : *Why are you fond of publicity ? You talk of selfless service so much ; and yet we find you are working for name and fame !*

Answer : Firstly, I am not *working* for name and fame. When a person does selfless service, fame comes to him, though he does not want it. You found it so in the case of Mahatma Gandhiji's life, also. Only selfless persons know how to utilise even that fame for doing more selfless service to a greater number of persons.

Secondly, it is through publicity I come into contact with more and more seekers after Truth. It is the publicity that enables more and more people to offer me opportunities to serve them. When people glorify me, they glorify only Sanyasa, they glorify a divine life of Sadhana; and, if by bringing this to the notice of others, they, too, can be inspired to lead the divine life, practise Sadhana for attaining self-realisation, I do not neglect it. As you know, lives of great men remind you that you can make your life sublime.

Thirdly, the man who runs after name and fame would not do menial service, would not mix freely with everybody, would not cut jokes and make people laugh in his presence; he would keep himself "far above" the common run of mankind, compel the awe and reverence of the people, and by artificially dwelling on high philosophical themes alone during his conversations, would endeavour to impress on those who meet him that he is far above all of them. I like to mix with all and to make everybody feel I am one with all. I take intense delight in doing every kind of service to everybody. I am full of educative humour; even a young boy can cut jokes with me.

Please come here and spend some time in the ashram. You will change your opinion.

2. The Secret Behind Pada-Puja

Question : *Swamiji, Why do you allow your feet to be worshipped, and regular Puja offered to your feet ?*

Answer : The materialistic modern mind needs a good flushing before understanding this. To the spiritual aspirant, the Guru's feet are not merely feet, but they are the channels of divine grace. From times immemorial the Indian seeker after truth has known that his receptive centre, viz., head, should come into contact with the preceptor's transmitting centre, the feet, in order to get infused with spiritual power, wisdom and light. This is one of the axioms of electricity, that the posi-

tive and negative poles should come into contact in order to complete the circuit.

Pada Puja develops the spirit of self-surrender in the aspirant. The flower symbolising the heart, the fruits symbolising the fruits of all actions, coins representing all wealth, and camphor symbolising the very soul of the aspirant, which gets totally absorbed in the enlightened Self of the Guru are first offered in worship; and finally the aspirant prostrates at the feet, signifying that everything without the least reservation is surrendered to the feet of the Sat-Guru.

Pada Puja creates and strengthens the aspirant's faith and devotion, and divine qualities like humility.

Bharata worshipped the divine feet of Lord Rama and took His sandals which he enthroned as Rama's representatives; he regarded himself as the viceroy of the sandals. It is such humility, faith and devotion that will make you divine.

Here, I do not compell people to come and worship my feet, if they, of their own accord insist on doing so out of their Guru Bhakti towards me, I cannot refuse. If I refuse I will not only be displeasing them who are anxious to prove their self-surrender and respect to me, but I will be failing in my duties too. Do you think I feel happy or elevated when they do so? I have to sit patiently bearing all that process. Surely it is not out of pleasure I agree to sit patiently!!

3. The Overcoat Problem

Question : *Why should a great saint like you who has renounced everything, put on an overcoat in winter ?*

Answer : Sanyasa means giving up the correct value to everything here. A saint or a Sanyasi will not sleep on thorns, eat mud and stones, walk on his head and break through walls. His body, too, is subject to hunger and thirst, heat and cold, etc. and an overcoat is only a vertical blanket in bits and stitched in a convenient way to cover the body against cold without hampering movement of the limbs for service. A blanket is a horizontal piece. I do not attach more importance or value to the coat.

After all why should you look at the outer garb? Try to perceive the inner man, his thoughts, his ideas and his virtues. Not the external details. Only a real saint can understand another saint.

It is not a body besmeared with ashes, or a flowing beard or matted locks that determine a saint. Why should you attach much importance to this overcoat of mine? To indulge in dress by way of luxury is certainly not justified. But for bare necessities the body must be provided with proper dress and food.

4. Why is Swamiji Fond of Being Photographed ?

Question : *Swamiji, while you always associate saintliness with humility, why are you so fond of being photographed ?*

Answer : The force behind the system of visual education which psychologists today acclaim as infinitely superior to text-book education will be apparent if you reflect over a very common phenomenon. Leave on your table in the study a few good books, and a few pictorials or a few photographs. Let your children, your friends, come into the study. What do they pick up first ? The books ? No. The photographs first, and then the pictorials.

It is not entirely without reason that the old women in South India prevented their grand children from being photographed, saying: "Your lustre will be taken away by the photograph, it is true that your lustre is transferred to the photograph. To your friends and relatives, to your near and dear ones, your photograph is alive, aglow with your lustre. Therefore, for a devotee a picture of the Lord, and to a disciple a picture of the Guru, is a Living Presence. It is necessary, for meditations.

Why are there so many photographs, you may ask ? Different people want different photographs, in different poses, with different backgrounds. I have to satisfy all of them. A photograph of mine taken twenty years ago may look more youthful and may be better

technically than the photograph taken today ; but the aspirant who has seen me for the first time today insists he should have a photograph of me as I am today and does not accept another taken twenty years ago, however nice it is. And, then, people want to be photographed with me ; these photographs act as momentous of their visits and inspire the visitors.

Refusing to be photographed is subtle egoism. It is timidity or fear of criticism in the garb of humility. If you have right discrimination, you will at once understand.

5. Sivananda and Lady Disciples

Question : *There is a general complaint here that Swamiji Maharaj, who is supposed to be above all caste, creed, religion and sex, is always surrounded by many lady-visitors mostly. Pray my Gurudev kindly answer this question put by some people and relieve them of their doubts.*

Answer : I do not prevent men from sitting around me. In fact, in the office there are quite a number of them always surrounding me. They sit on the bench provided for visitors and the ladies, naturally in keeping with Indian tradition, sit on the ground, around my table. While walking about, the European custom prevails : and the men of their own accord let the "ladies first" : therefore, the ladies seem to crowd round me and the men walk a few paces behind.

But when all is said and done, no one can deny that women have more devotion than men who have been endowed with more of intellect. It is the ladies' devotion that makes them sit near my table in the office ; and it is the men's intellect that makes them question the propriety ! When the intellectual man cultivates devotion, too, the result is an understanding heart and breadth of vision that leads him soon to self-realisation.

I am as much interested in the spiritual welfare of women as in that of men ; perhaps I take a little more interest in guiding women on the path of Sadhana. There are three reasons for this. Firstly you know the wise saying : "The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world." Woman is the maker of man ; if she is spiritual then there is no doubt that the whole mankind would be pious and peaceful. Secondly, while men all over the world are busy running after the shadow, trying to acquire wealth and the useless objects of this world, it is the women who have preserved Dharma as best as they can. They need all the spiritual strength and encouragement we can provide them. Thirdly, as your (the men's) "better half", I know that if she is spiritually inclined, she will not leave you behind but will take you with her along the spiritual path. She is man's 'Sahadharmini' and even if, in the busy work-a-day world man forgets his role for a while, woman will not and be patiently working for his welfare and convert him to the life divine.

Music as Yoga : Not Music Vs. Yoga

Question : *In an Ashram where you have gathered together young spiritual aspirants, promising to guide them in their rapid march to the goal of Life, viz., self-realisation, why do you encourage dance, drama and music ?*

Answer : The question betrays an ignorance of the fundamental principles of music and dance. They are divine. I should request you to remember that Lord Krishna with his inseparable flute and Mother Saraswati with Her veena remind you that music is divine. Lord Nataraja reminds you that dance had its origin in Him. The wickedness of man would misuse anything. Because pickpockets are found in abundance in a temple on a festival day, should we deny ourselves the blessing of His Darshan ?

It is a pity that these two divine arts—music and dance—have been brought down to the level of sensuous entertainment. It is the sacred duty of every lover of God and the fine arts to raise them to their original standards of purity and divinity.

Music is Nada-Yoga. It at once enables you to attain union with Nada-Brahmam, the sacred Pranava. Nritya or dance enables you to enter into Bhava-Samadhi.

Drama is a very powerful instrument for the dissemination of spiritual knowledge. What you cannot teach through hundreds of books

and hours of lecture, you can bring home to the audience easily and effectively through a single play. Drama is an art-form that touches the heart.

The very fact that the worldly man has taken such an interest in these three and mis-used them to fulfil his nefarious purposes, shows what a tremendous power they have over the heart and soul of man. What a blessing they will be if they are used for spiritual ends!

* * * * *

Thank you very much Swami Maharaj for patiently answering all the important questions I am sure you have relieved them of their many doubts and unnecessary suspicions. I have no doubt that more and more will be anxious to join your principles of learning when they know you and understand you better. Jai Sivanandaya.

**Glories to Guru Dev.
Jai Guru Bhagawan
Jai Hind.**



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The very fact that the worldly man has taken such an interest in these three and misused them to fulfil his nefarious purposes shows what a tremendous power they have over the heart and soul of man. What a blessing they will be if they are used for spiritual ends.

I thank you very much Sirs. May I say a few words about the important questions I am sure you have raised them of their many doubts and uncertainties. I have no doubt that you will be anxious to join your principles of learning when they know you and understand you better. I am sure.



Glories to Gurm Dev.
Jai Gurm Bhagwan
Jai Hind.

GLOSSORY

Vairagya P. 27	—Spirit of renunciation
Ananda	—Joyfulness
Jeevanmukta P. 32	—Free from all earthly bondage
Japa P. 33	—Repeated utterances of the divine name of God mentally
Satchidananda Swaroopa	—Incarnation of the Divine soul
Ajnana mala	—Darkness of ignorance
Antaryami	—The omnipresent and Omniscient
Pranayam P. 44	—Practising the control of breath in different positions
Arati P. 52	—Method of greeting the deity with one or more lighted lamps
Shanti Path	—Recital of holy scriptures
Mahima P. 54	—Glory and greatness
Nad P. 56	—Melodious Sound
Hatha yoga P. 58	—Typical Indian form of penance
Srutis P. 69	—Religious literature of ancient days
Satyam Vada	—Speak the Truth
Vach Siddhi	—The ability of speaking such words which will always result in truth
Moksha	—Emancipation
Shanti	—Peace
Satsang	—Good company
Santosh	—Satisfaction
Vichara P. 72	—Good judgment
Ragadwesa P. 76	—Anger and jealousy
Vasana	—Desire
Sankalpa	—Determination
Samskara P. 88	—Tradition

(b)

Bhava Samadhi P. 93	—Feeling of being in union with the Almighty
Purvashram P. 98	—The abode of one, before initiation
Gyani P. 100	—The wise man
Sat-Guru P. 102	—The right or genuine type of preceptor
Karma-phala P. 104	—Results of past action
Paripurna P. 105	—Perfection
Maya P. 109	—Illusion
Nirvikalpa Samadhi	—Undisturbed Meditation losing all consciousness
Tapasya P. 112	—Hard penance
Pralaya P. 116	—Complete annihilation
Prasad P. 119	—Edible things offered in the name of God
Prem P. 124	—Love & blessings
Pati Dev P. 125	—Husband
Bhakti P. 126	Devotion
Atmic P. 127	—Concerning the soul
Guru Poornima P. 129	—The full moon night in the month of Sravan
Atman P. 131	—The soul
Adhyatmic P. 132	—Religious
Vikshepa P. 133	—Lamentations
Nama Smaran P. 134	—Remembrance of the name of God
Vaikunta P. 138	—The abode of Lord Vishnu

(c)

Pooja	—Worshipping
P. 141	
Mrityunjaya japa	—Repeated utterances of the name of God who has conquered Death, i.e. Siva
Yagya	—Performance of religious rites
P. 144	pouring in 'ghee' in the fire in the name of God
Sanga	—Good Company
Tyaga	—Sacrifice
P. 149	
Grihasthasrama	—The institute of a happy family
Bhukti	—Being inclusive of
Mukti	—Salvation
P. 151	
Pratyahara	—Sincere devotion and penance
P. 154	
Vakdevi	—The Goddess of Words, i.e. the Goddess Saraswati
P. 156	
Chyavanaprasa	—One kind of Ayurvedic medicine, usually prescribed for cough and cold
P. 169	
Kripa	—Mercy
Dhyana	—Prayer in meditation
P. 170	
Prabhu	—Lord
P. 177	
Rath	—Chariot
P. 178	
Sankirtan	—Recital of Kirtana songs
P. 179	
Jeevadhara	—Stream of Life
Namavali	—Serial utterances of holy names of the God or the Lord
P. 181	
Prarthanas	—Prayers in the name of the God
P. 182	
Darshana	—Sight
P. 184	
Guru Kripa	—Mercy of the Lord
P. 185	
Bhooloka Aiswarya	—Earthly treasure
P. 186	

(d)

Kaivalya P. 186	—Salvation
Prabhav	—Influence
Bhaktas P. 187	—Devotees
Raksha P. 190	—Safe guard
Ishta Deva P. 192	—Self owned family deity
Parasakthi P. 194	—The great and sublime power
Matru Devo Bhava P. 198	—Mother is the Goddess incarnate
Yogi	—One who has practised 'yoga' i.e. hard penance and has be- come a saint.
Pada Puja P. 201	—Worshipping of the holy feet
Darbar P. 204	—Royal Court
Ashram	—Hermitage
Sanyasa P. 207	—The stage of self . renunciation
Sadhana	—Hard and rigid form of penance being imbued with the good and noble spirit of a devotee.
Guru Bhakti P. 209	—Sincere devotion unto the Lord or Guru, i.e. Preceptor
Dharma P. 213	—Religion
Sahadharmini	—The wife as a Partner in life being completely imbued with religious feelings and ideas
Nataraja P. 241	—Lord Siva, who was the creator of dance styles.
Nada-Brahman	—The supreme force incarnated in the effects of melodious sounds.
Pranava	—The sublime and divine musical sound
Bhava-Smadhi	—Being completely plunged into divine thoughts.

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The sage's life has been narrated by the authoress in extremely simple style, for the benefit of school-going children. The teachings of Shri Swamiji she has selected and presented are precious, luminous gems that illumine the path of man to peace, plenty and prosperity, joy, bliss and immortality. The "questions and answers" not only clear any mistaken notion that the mere intellect might entertain, but provide entertaining information about the Swami and the unique institution that has grown round him.

The Publishers commend this book to the attention of educational authorities; as Shri Swamiji has very often remarked, among the children are many saints and sages, awaiting the awakening influence — and to them this volume may well bring that influence.

Shrimathi Vani has lived up to her name which, in Indian lore, is the name of the Goddess of Learning, Wisdom and Music. To her has been vouches by benign providence the privilege of blending in her heart and in her outlook upon life all that is best in the culture of the East and the West. She, as is her Divine Master Shri Swami Sivanandaji, is a challenge to Kipling's dictum ; both of them have not only proved it false, but endeavoured,—with other great Indian leaders—to bridge the gulf between the East and the West.

In this volume she eagerly shares with “children”, young and old, the divine life of Shri Swamiji that she has seen, the glorious mission of Shri Swamiji that she has watched take shape, and the life-transforming teachings of Swamiji that she has studied and imbibed.
